

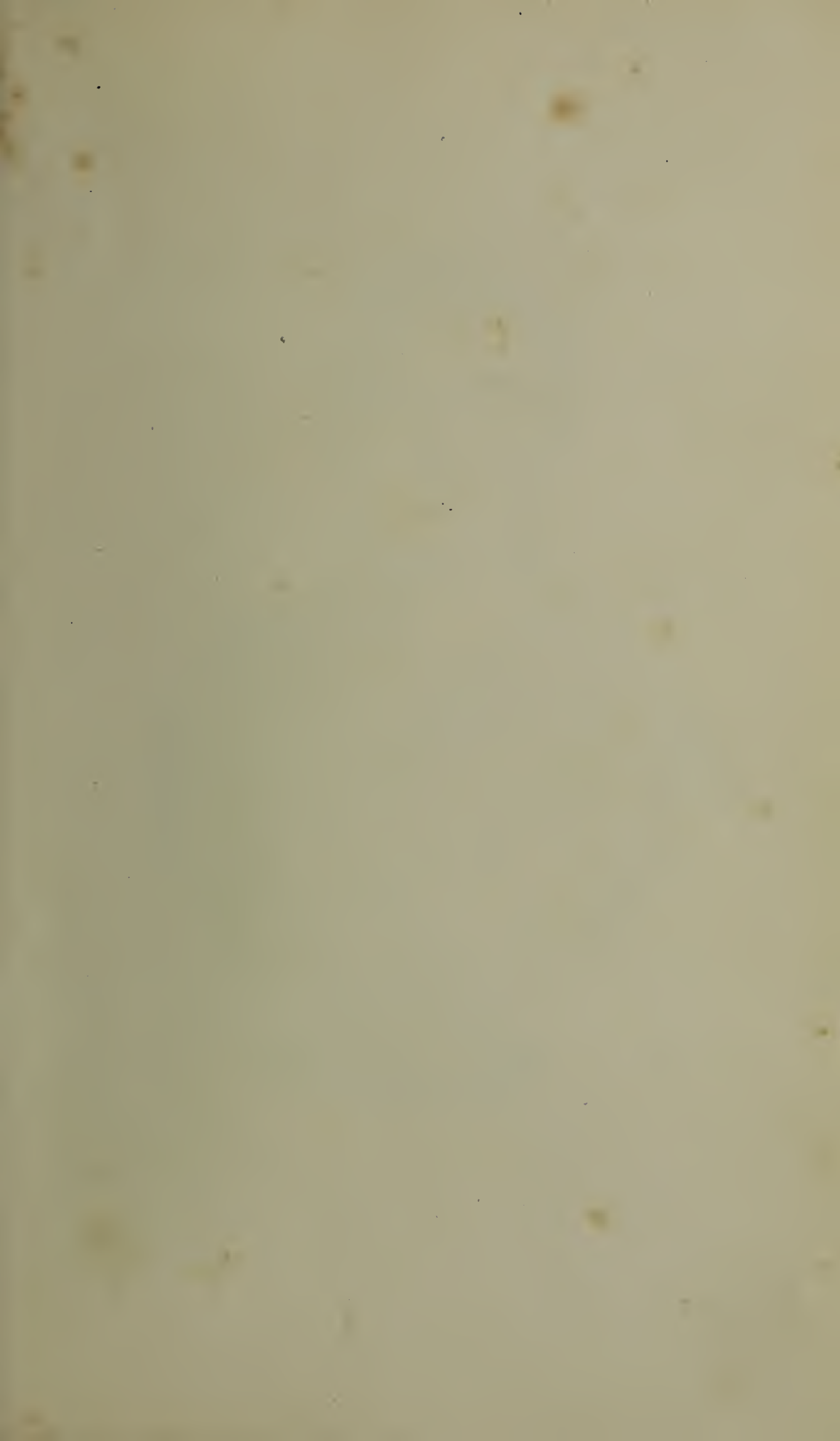
ON THE CURE
OF
STAMMERING.
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HUNT



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A TREATISE
ON THE
CURE OF STAMMERING.





THE LATE THOMAS HUTT ESQ.^{RE}

Originator of the System for the Cure of Stammering

FROM A MARBLE BUST

A TREATISE
ON THE
CURE OF STAMMERING,
WITH A NOTICE OF THE
LIFE OF THE LATE THOMAS HUNT,
AND A
GENERAL ACCOUNT OF THE VARIOUS SYSTEMS FOR THE CURE OF
IMPEDIMENTS IN SPEECH.

BY
JAMES HUNT, M.R.S.L. ETC.

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INTRODUCTION.

NEARLY three years since I published a work under a similar title to the present; but it only contained about one-third of the matter, which appears here for the first time. In that edition I contented myself with vindicating the system here explained against its assailants, and giving a general synopsis of my late father's ideas on stammering; but now there will be found a minute detail of the different causes of defective utterance and an entire *exposé* of the plans that have been recommended for their cure.

I have endeavoured clearly to establish the fact that there are numerous causes which produce Psellismus, and consequently the treatment must necessarily vary, according to the peculiarity of the case; hence asserting that written systems and explanations are not only useless, but injurious; and that only *viva voce* instructions can remove

impediments of speech. Elsewhere* I have said that “a system which rests on *vivâ voce* instructions applicable to cases of great variety, both as regards cause and effect, cannot be given in any formula of words, and consequently can only be described in practice.” I feel convinced that I shall be supported eventually in this opinion by all who study the subject. The *Athenæum*† remarks, “We hold that elocution cannot be successfully taught without *vivâ voce* instruction;” and in this I entirely concur, which opinion is equally applicable to removing defects, as it is in imparting a finished style of delivery.

I have divided stammerers into two great classes;—the sensitive and the careless. On the former I have urged the importance of their infirmity being eradicated, to prevent the mind falling into that morbid state in which we generally find it, especially in cases of long standing. The opinions I have brought forward relative to the mind and nerves, are founded on no small experience. That sort of stammering which is commonly attributed to the nerves, I have shown

* In a letter inserted in the *Medical Times and Gazette*, June 10, 1854, in answer to an article by the Editor, expressing his regret that I had not printed my system of instruction.

† The *Athenæum*, June 9, 1855.

would be more correctly termed *mental stammering*; consisting purely in a want of confidence, on the part of the sufferer, in his own powers.

To the medical profession generally I owe my grateful acknowledgments for their generous and unbiassed support. I regret to be obliged to pass some severe strictures on surgical operations, as practised by one member of the profession at the present time. My acquaintance with, and study of medical science, enable me to add my testimony to the uselessness, and injurious effects of these operations: a full detail of which I have now given; and I do not hesitate to say that, after the slightest operation, the difficulty of curing stammering is increased tenfold, and occasionally rendered impossible.

The present form of this *brochure* enables me to give a complete history of the system, from its commencement thirty years ago, up to the present state of its scientific application and general efficacy.

The quack pretensions of anonymous advertisers, and the disgraceful practices of impostors, who attempt to deceive the public, I have not scrupled to severely condemn. My thanks are particularly owing to the public press for their

charitable reception of my former book, and also for their voluntary services, in exposing the nefarious practices of pretenders.

All technicalities have been studiously avoided; and I feel convinced that a careful perusal of the contents, will remove many of the popular delusions that exist respecting stammering. No subject has been so enveloped in mystery, and its removal so sceptically treated: and yet I venture to affirm that there is no affliction that can be so effectually and permanently removed, provided the necessary time and attention be given.

JAMES HUNT.

8, New Burlington Street,*

June 2nd, 1856.

* And Swanage, Dorset, during the month of September.

STAMMERING.

THE general terms, Stammering, Psellimus or Stuttering, include a considerable variety of impediments to the perfection of human speech; defects in physical organization, the misuse of perfect organs to a painful degree, bad habits, and the many slighter affections arising out of involuntary imitation, or the mere want of knowledge how, most naturally, easily, and effectively to employ, the beautiful machinery with which God has endowed us, for the exercise of the most important of all our functions—the employment of the voice. Estimable as are the blessings of the ear, the eye, the touch, and other senses; it is speech which elevates man above the animal world, and enables him to give utterance to the divine intellect within him, in tone and language, worthy of his high condition in the scale of being. Viewing the subject in this comprehensive light, it appears, at first sight, truly astonishing, how little it has attracted and fixed general attention. But a few moments philosophical reflection will elicit a sufficient cause for this phenomenon. If the sight or hearing be impaired, which is ascer-

tainable every hour of our lives by personal feeling or comparison with our neighbours, we at once seek the aid of the oculist, optician, or aurist. But the differences in speaking continue with man's growth, and are familiar to every individual; and however peculiar, disagreeable, or distressing: they have become, as it were, part and parcel of his nature, and unless the affliction is deplorably aggravated, he is content to go to his grave without attempting a remedy. One lisps, another speaks in the falsetto voice; one is guttural, another nasal; some unable to articulate the letter *r*, or *th*; and so they keep each other in countenance; upon which I shall offer but one remark, *viz.*: that nineteen in twenty of them might, instead of this Babel confusion, be taught a natural style of elocution, pleasant to their hearers, and comfortable to themselves. But the management of the organs of speech is not taught in any School or College in Great Britain, and, indeed, the real functions of the vocal organs are not understood by those whose duty it is to teach it: all is left to chance, and chance decides it. A very few acute, studious, and highly cultivated individuals may strike out a course for themselves—genius, even in their cases, often only colouring and partially surmounting defects;—but the many grow up with the herd, and never suspect what superior powers would be theirs, if simply and properly developed. Except in the extreme, when the imperfection absolutely prevents the social in-

tercourse and pursuits, business, enjoyment, and progress—and frequently not even then,—do people think it worth while to make any effort to amend or remove, their annoying and injurious oppression.

Under these circumstances, and aware from experience, that not only may the minor inconveniences referred to, be eradicated, but the greatest of those evils remedied, I have ventured to offer the following statements and observations to the intelligence of the country. As a preliminary remark, I may mention that never has any affliction to which the human frame is liable, been attempted to be cured, in so many different ways. All systems that have been propounded, and all discoverers of a single cure for all cases, have been entirely mistaken, and their researches rendered useless, because they have laid their plans on too narrow a foundation. It has ever been a fundamental mistake to assert that there is one cause for all cases of stammering,—and consequently, one remedy to be applied.

The various character and gradation in stammering, have probably contributed much to the mistaken notions recommended for its cure. With one professor, monotonous measurement, as unpleasant as the original disorder, is attempted to be substituted. Another employs the nose for the mouth: the lessons of a third would be as appropriate for a singing master, and a fourth cuts away tonsils and uvulas as if they had no business whatever with the anatomical economy

and the emission of sound. Much public suspicion and disgust have been very naturally engendered by such absurd and barbarous proceedings. None of the specifics have been established; some have been laughed at, and the last severely condemned. I should as soon think of slashing off a pupil's lips, drawing his teeth, or splitting his tongue, as of mutilating him in this injurious and atrocious manner. I have no cutting or maiming in my system, which is simply rational and not surgical; although there are cases where I have been successfully called in by eminent surgeons and dentists to complete the cures, they have so far effected by supplying deficient palates, or performing operations rendered absolutely necessary, by defective organization; before any attempt could be made to produce and regulate an articulate voice. When a person has a defective palate, modern invention can, most ingeniously, supply the defect, by the appliance of an artificial gold palate, and the patient requires to be informed how to make the most economical use of the foreign substance. In a few weeks an extraordinary change is effected, and, ere long, the articulation becomes so different that little more can be desired.*

In ordinary cases of misapplication, rather than malformation or want, I have found my method — matured by long practice and careful

* See a case with congenital fissure in the palate, related in "Observations on Cleft Palate," by Professor Fergusson, F.R.S.

comparison of numerous results,—certain and adequate to the purpose of cure, if the necessary attention is given.

During my practice of the system, there have been pupils belonging to the church, to the law, to the medical, and military professions, and to almost every walk of middle and humbler life. By being informed and making themselves masters of the system, the clergyman has been enabled to perform his sacred functions with propriety and effect; the lawyer to plead in open court instead of being confined to chamber practice; the doctor to consult with his brethren, and converse with his patients unembarrassed by impediments, which would impair the usefulness of his talents in regard to both; the public speaker to deliver himself with emphasis; the cadet to pass his examinations, and the officer to be fit for the exercise of command; and, finally, the middle classes to transact such business as they are engaged in, and the still lower orders to be eligible for improvement in their circumstances, and elevation in their condition. These, however, are but samples and exceptions among the multitude in similar stations and employments, who never have sought amendment from similar imperfections, and go on in their several important occupations in church, and state, the learned professions, army, navy, or other departments, in such a way as to be almost nugatory if not even ridiculous. For in many persons who have never felt any impediment, the acquisition of

a full and perfect use of the voice has never been explained to them. They know as little of the quality and extent of their powers of speech, as vocalists of their power of song, before they have a lesson in singing; and thus it frequently happens, that the cure of stammering brings out latent capabilities, such as a fine chest voice, where there never has been aught, but a feeble or discordant thoraxical enunciation. Lungs, throat, palate, tongue, lips, teeth, breath, all misemployed! No wonder we should find so many indifferent speakers and confirmed stammerers!

The very slight notice of stammering in ancient biography or history, might give rise to some curious speculation. The prominent instance of Demosthenes proves that even in the mellifluous language of Greece, malapplication of the vocal organs, caused imperfect articulation and delivery. The fancied means stated to have been resorted to for a cure, belong to the old legendary form of embellishment, by which so much of what had some foundations in truth, copiously mixed with inventive fiction, has descended down the stream of time. It would be long enough before a mouthful of pebbles, and spouting to the roaring sea, would restore erratic nature to natural order and power. Yet this *vis medicatrix naturæ* is the only method to overcome impediments of speech, and no other that has ever been tried could possibly succeed. The work must be done by nature—by nature being directed or redirected into a proper course, and

by attention to the rules which accomplish this; and every other process, is an ineffectual outrage or perversion; since cutting off parts, injures nature's provision; and teaching the substitution of one defect or peculiarity for another, as by cadences, or pauses, or nasal utterance, or holding the breath, &c., &c., are but fruitless or hurtful shifts, to alter the character of what is troublesome to the speaker, and displeasing to the hearer.

The case of Demosthenes has been so hackneyed by persons who have written on the subject, that I will only say it is quite a mistake to believe speaking in the manner described, would be of any assistance to the multitude. We are told by his biographer, Plutarch, that he received instruction from Satyrus, a Grecian comedian. How far we can attribute his cure to one or the other it is uncertain: but he freed himself from his difficulty, with immense mental energy, at last, and discovered the secret of his defect. This cannot be effected by one person in a thousand; yet when we have discovered the various causes of stammering, we are then enabled by experience, to point out the cause, and remedy. In the generality of cases, filling the buccal cavity with pebbles would produce a greater difficulty at articulation. This has been tried in hundreds of instances; but not only found entirely to fail, but there is a danger in using them on account of their liability to be swallowed. To prevent this M. Stard invented an instrument, consisting of a

gold fork about an inch in length, put on a concave stand, and applied by its convex surface to the alveolar arch of the lower jaw. He tells us of two cases; one that had to use it a *year and a half* without taking it out of his mouth; and the second was better at eight months!

But Demosthenes, it may be presumed, did by certain means correct the imperfection under which he laboured, and became the most memorable orator in the world; and this illustrates another of my positions; *viz.*: that wherever skill or instruction enables us to surmount a blemish, it does not merely place us on a level, *quoad* that particular case, but absolutely creates a beauty where the deformity existed.*

This result does not follow as a natural issue, and is only exemplified in persons of an ambitious mind, willing to go through any ordeal; who can hope to attain a superiority over their fellow creatures. I have, however, had this exemplified in some of my pupils of great mental strength; and it is a common occurrence to find a fine mellow voice and every qualification for a true orator, to be

* I may state one case, out of many in point, as an illustration:—A young gentleman, the son of a dignitary of the Church, labouring under a severe impediment of the nature alluded to, was a pupil, and speedily overcame the distressing habit; he not only accomplished that object, but acquired so perfect a command of his vocal organs, that he carried off the prize as the best reader of his year, as scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge. Could there be a stronger inducement than this example, to Clergymen especially, and individuals called upon to address any public auditory, to make themselves masters of principles which would implant distinctness and force, where, far too often, the opposite drawbacks on their useful exertions are found to exist?

hidden under the contortions of the countenance and distress of mind.

The enemy is not only vanquished, but the post occupied to advantage: the weakness has yielded to superior strength; and superior strength establishes the foundation of superior excellence. All things conform to this; and the fine arts, sciences, and literature, are filled with examples of it.

I have incidentally mentioned the mellifluous language of Greece, and it would be an interesting inquiry to ascertain, as far as we could, the influence of different dialects upon the causation of stammering. There are not sufficient data, however, on which to frame a useful theory. It is presumable that a soft flowing tongue, may not exhibit such a per centage of stammerers, as a harsh and guttural one; and even mildness or severity of climate may considerably affect the subject. In England we find an excess of the average amount of stammerers in the North, where the language meets the Scotch Gaelic. In these parts there is a mixed language spoken; and persons are often unable to speak either the one or the other perfectly. The result is that they find a difficulty at both, and hence arises a hesitation, the forerunner of stammering. In no civilized country in the world, in fact, do we find stammering entirely a stranger.

It may appear strange to allude to civilization as increasing the number of stammerers, but the fact can hardly be doubted. Savages do not

stammer; in them the human animal remains unchanged. In the civilized world, on the contrary, refinement has materially altered the physical man. Robustness yields to delicacy, and the very structure of organs undergoes metamorphosis. The ample jaw of the wild Indian, for instance, has room for the full dentition of the species; whilst the contracted jaw, the result of civilization, in the features of more elevated beings, is insufficient for the reception of the numerical providence of the teeth. Hence the almost universally needed assistance of experienced dentists, to limit the number, and train what are left to their necessary functions. Other organs have undergone similar changes, and the issue has been to render attention to the education and management of the voice at least as expedient and important, as it is to the preservation of the eyes, or the cultivation and management of the teeth.

Some writers on the subject have suggested the desirability of learning a foreign language as a means of cure. This has, however, been often adopted without the least benefit; and sometimes it has had the effect of producing new difficulties which do not exist in our language. Even if a person can speak a foreign language without difficulty, we find it has no effect in removing that, which already exists in his own. Association would be quite sufficient to cause a return of it, even if the physical difficulty had been overcome. Those cases that have derived benefit from foreign

travel are quite the exception, and are, for the most part, attributable to the improvement of the bodily health, derived from change of air and scene, which withdraws the sufferer, for the time being, from the contemplation of his troubles. In some cases a perfect acquaintance with all the languages in the world, would be of no service; and, by way of illustration, I may mention a case of a Russian officer by whom I was lately consulted, and who was perfectly acquainted with six languages, yet found the same difficulty in all;—the cause of his stammering being a mis-use of the tongue, which rendered him quite unable to articulate certain sounds in which the proper use of that organ was essential. All that he required was to be informed how to use it naturally; and with due application, under my directions, he was soon enabled to speak without the slightest difficulty. And thus it is with the generality of cases; they only require an explanation of the proper use of the organs of speech, and are then enabled to free themselves from one of the most annoying disorders of the human frame.

Stammering is, however, far from being of uniform difficulty to overcome; one case presented being extremely simple, and easily conquered, while the next is as complicated and tedious. In some cases you not only find all the organs of articulation and vocalization implicated, but you have likewise a mental derangement to remove; and it is in such cases that our knowledge of Phy-

chology is of the greatest importance, together with the general laws that regulate the nervous system. Some cases, indeed, exhibit the most complicated phenomena: and it is only by the result of long practice and study, with an accurate knowledge of the anatomy of the vocal organs, that we can hope successfully to grapple with such a complicated derangement.

The ease to be acquired and the command over the same physical construction of the vocal system, so generally misapprehended, are so obviously accessible that one cannot help wondering at the disbelief in a ready remedy. Not to speak of the puzzling digamma of the Greek, or the strange click of the Hottentot (which learned scholars believe resembles it), it is instruction and practice, which enables any individual to imitate these sounds, or pronounce words foreign to those to which he has been accustomed from his infancy. Thus no Englishman, on being asked to repeat them, could utter a hundred of the inflections in the Polish language; but any person of common talents can be taught in a short time to imitate them all. And so it is with stammering; the unused or abused organs refuse the office for which they are perfectly competent. A single sentence of experienced advice will often at once, as if by magic, and almost always with tolerable application, put an end to the organic confusion, and replace nature on her throne. I could dilate much more on this branch of illustration, but as my

anxiety is infinitely greater to show what can be done, than what has been, I shall come to the practical points, which, I think, scepticism itself will hardly attempt to controvert.

Of all the material blessings which man can enjoy on earth, it has been pithily stated, in five Latin words, that (*mens sana in corpore sano*), a sound mind in a sound body is by far the greatest. The sound mind must be created and modified more or less by education, example, and circumstances; and it is a great blessing when, whatever its order may be, it is amenable to healthful rules and guidance. But the body, though not perhaps in reality more variously affected than the mind, is yet, to human sense, more visibly liable to many imperfect developments and deteriorating injuries. On examining the action of the mind and its growth, we discover that it can be compared to the bodily functions in all its capabilities. Too many persons suppose the mind of a child to be as capable of as much exertion as the matured brain. To grow naturally and strong, the mind requires the same watching, of all its functions, as the body. Great care should be taken that too much mental food is not given, for fear of weakening the organs employed. A careful mental training is of great service, and enables a person to carry out instruction given to him. Cramming, however, is becoming too generally adopted; but it would be far better to thoroughly digest a little, than to overload the mental powers, and thus bring on inaction.

Such are their obvious conditions and relations of mind and matter, that it is only in pursuits such as mine, their wonderfully close and intimate dependance on each other can be clearly understood: how stammering may, and often does produce, either a certain degree of mental weakness, or a serious interference with bodily health; and, *vice versa*, how affections of the mind and nerves operate in the production of stammering. It is this which makes the judgment of the astute physician and accomplished medical practitioner so pre-eminently valuable. Life and death seem to depend, and very often do, upon their skill; and as all the power and wealth in this world, is worth nothing without health, it is the more surprising that the solicitude for this blessing should ever be subordinate to any other object; and that sacrifices should be continually offered on the altars of ambition, avarice, or any other mortal passions, at the cost of that loss which must embitter the highest triumphs, and end in an untimely grave.

Having devoted myself to a peculiar branch of physiology, intimately connected with the restorative processes, I have felt myself assimilated to a system, of much moral elevation and immense temporal utility. I consequently entertain very cordially the opinion I have expressed, and cherish a certain degree of veneration for the surgeon and the physician, who, by a timely application of their knowledge, restore the disabled to vigour, and the

dying to health; and therefore it is that in the line I have so devoutly studied, I receive intense gratification when I succeed in restoring the inapt to aptitude, by teaching those who have forsaken or abused the gifts of nature, to use them for their own advantage, and the honour of their Creator in his own image.

I presume no further than my own province, after witnessing the fruits of twenty-five years' experience in my father's practice, and I pretend to nothing more than the employment of instruction and reason, to remedy, in the vast majority of cases, all those painful impediments which constitute not only barriers to the common intercourse and enjoyments of life, but to individual progress in advancing in any class of mechanical employment, business, professional or social pursuits.

The notion so long entertained that the disorder could not be cured, has also helped to aggravate the calamity; but more rational opinions now prevail, and, like insanity, the application of judicious remedial means, untainted by charlatanism, and unstained by cruelty, are found to be sufficient always to alleviate, and, in the great majority of cases, entirely to eradicate the suffering. As in the one, the due exercise of intellect can be restored to well-balanced order; so in the other case the organization of nature, perverted by extraneous causes, or infected by bad habits, can be restored to its proper functions, and stammerers be taught to speak and read as plainly as though

they had never failed in these essential qualifications. The ease and expedition which are its given merits, though unattended by the more striking effect of the expedient of the knife on the tonsils, ought surely to enhance and not detract from the fair claim of the system to approbation and reward.

I urge this, however, from no selfish motives; from no feeling of (even partial) injustice. I cannot undertake to supply intellect, or to cure where that is wanting; neither am I so visionary as to expect unmixed satisfaction for services rendered. But I put it forward, and would fain insist upon it, with all the enthusiasm which has conducted this system through trials and anxieties not readily to be overestimated, for the sake of advocating a larger patronage, and some comprehensive sphere, as national desiderata and benefit! There has been so much of prejudice and wrong in this respect, that it is most desirable that a normal school should be founded, and tuition generalized throughout the country, for the culture of elocution and cure of stammering.

It is a remarkable fact that at the present time little attention is thought worthy to be paid to the art of public speaking. The culture of elocution is nearly neglected at our Universities; yet this country holds out the greatest necessity for persons to become orators. This power often does as much to raise an individual in the world, as any mental qualification. We lose the influence of great numbers of Members of Parliament, because they

are scarcely able to express their ideas on the subject before them, independently of the numerous defects in articulation, many of which come under the province of the elocutionists; (with whose teaching I am careful not to have mine confounded) and I leave them to urge this important subject on public attention. There are, however, good reasons why all defects in speech, especially the serious affliction of stammering, should have some assistance from Government. If there is a simple system by which these defects can be overcome, I would ask, should not that be universally adopted? Some persons think that stuttering is confined to the educated and refined; but such is not the fact. In all the manufacturing districts this affliction is found to exist to a great extent; and the number of persons that are suffering under it appear to be incredible. It exists much more in the thickly populated districts than other places. The Legislature ought certainly to allow the public the benefit of a discovery which cannot be expected from a single individual. The comparative ease with which youths can be cured, would enable the National School-masters to become acquainted with the system, and thus check stammering in its bud. And if the principles I teach were universally adopted, we should be, as a nation, far better speakers, and free from all those defects, which are now complete barriers to success in life. If the education of all classes is a duty of a state, surely the removal of this disorder, and teaching the

proper use of the voice, ought not to be entirely neglected !

There are and have been very able elocutionists under whose instruction great present advantages are acquired, and the management of the voice most effectually taught. Parliament and the pulpit have been adorned by the pupils of such teachers: to their own high gratification in having obtained the mastery, and to the good of legislation and religion. The only drawback that can be suggested to so beneficial a course, is that it falls short of an entire and lasting remedy. The improvement is immediate and striking; but it has been made under auspices which do not aim at the further inculcation of sound principles to regulate the future, and enable the party, by recurring to them, to prevent any relapse into disorder,—so removed, but not eradicated. In many public instances, however, we must acknowledge the individual acquisition, retention, and employment of principles similar to those which I teach. The highest example in the land may loyally be alluded to. Her Majesty, in the delivery of her speeches on the opening or closing the Sessions of Parliament, speaks in so clear and distinct a manner, that not a syllable is lost throughout the crowded expanse of the House of Lords. From how few of her hearers could the same important qualification be expected? Not from one in twenty! and yet the whole twenty might be informed how they could, more or less,

get rid of the indistinctness and inaudibility so often noticed in our Parliamentary reports.

It is well known that Psellismus is far less frequent in women than in men; but no satisfactory reason has ever been adduced to account for this phenomenon. The organs of speech are undoubtedly of finer organization, and women converse with less difficulty than men. The difference in their education, and the less mental exertion they are called on to use, may be adduced as a reason. Mr. E. Lee advocates the hypothesis, that they have a quicker apprehension, and a readier judgment, than men; and that hence their articulation excels, in ease, fluency, and volubility. He quotes the following from Rousseau in support of his opinion. "Girls have the organs of speech more supple and flexible than boys; they speak sooner and easier, and women speak more agreeably than men. They are accused of speaking more: such ought to be the case, and I would willingly convert this reproach into praise. The eyes and mouth have in them the same movability. Always occupied in pleasing; observing with the most persevering attention everything that passes around them; always expert to profit by their advantages, and reduced by the state of our society and manners to shine only by singing, dancing, but especially by conversation, they give themselves up to these exercises with ardour, and excel in them more than men. The whole nervous system is also more developed in them;

the impressions they receive are more powerful and multiplied, and hence they have a greater number of sensations and internal feelings to make known: anxious to penetrate the secrets of men, and to ascertain the state of their hearts, speech is for them the most useful instrument and the most indispensable to their happiness."

It is generally estimated that the number of females amounts to little more than five per cent. but I think this is too low an estimate; and I should be more inclined to say that out of every hundred stammerers in this country, we should find that nearly ten were females. In France the average certainly must be less, if we believe M. Itard, who has written on the subject; and who asserts that he never witnessed a female stammer! and does not believe they are guilty of such a thing! It is, however, quite the reverse in England; and a great many cases that have come under my notice, have been of the most severe and painful nature; and requiring great care to overcome. Their habitual timidity, which is always aggravated by a derangement of the nerves, combines to produce intricate cases. Some are often accompanied by a great weakness of some of the muscles, which at last produces an involuntary action of the part. These cases require more time and exertion to conquer than many: and although I have met with some cases which present a great complication, yet I have always been able to alleviate the impediment; and by instilling confidence

as to their own powers, and with practice and diligence, they have at last been enabled to speak on all occasions with ease and fluency.

The action and reaction of the mental and physical constitutions, in certain cases are unexpected and surprising. Thus the cure of stammering is found to operate wonderfully upon the health. I have known it arrest the progress of disease, even so appalling as consumption; and it has almost invariably the effect of quieting and invigorating the nervous system. The mind is the master of speech, and through it alone can we act on the organs necessary for the complicated process of articulation. We often find that the simple vowel sounds, which only require the organs of vocalization, can be pronounced without difficulty; yet when we come to put into action the many other muscles that are necessary for articulate speech,—and when we reflect on the immense number of organs necessary for the production of a single consonant, it cannot be wondered, that the study of the physiology of speaking, has always been surrounded by great difficulty. Even those persons who have given the subject their consideration, and spent no little time and labour in only arriving at a few facts (for this is all that they have done), have not gone far enough in their researches, or they would have discovered the fallacy of many of their own theories. I freely admit that great light has been thrown on this subject by such writers as Dr. Arnott and Sir C. Bell; but it would

require very little experience to prove that the theories they have advanced, will not admit of being the foundation of a correct universal system. That cases of stammering do arise from the closing of the glottis, I readily admit; yet at the same time I assert, that the majority of cases of Psellismus originate from an entirely different cause.

Many persons have not the least power to vocalize their breath; and we find the cause of their difficulty to be an entire misuse of all the organs of respiration;* some the facial muscles; others all the organs of articulation.

I will now explain, as fully as my prescribed limits will admit, the utter fallacy of founding a theory on such a narrow basis as Dr. Arnott has done, when he says, "Were it possible to divide the nerves of the muscles which close the glottis, without at the same time destroying the faculty of producing voice, such an operation would be the most immediate and certain cure of stuttering; and the loss of the faculty of closing the glottis would be of no moment." Now this I must, with all respect, entirely deny, for the obvious reason that the glottis is only one of very many causes which produce a difficulty of utterance: and the same answer can be given to the whole theory advanced by Dr. Arnott. The truth of this assertion must be self-evident to all who have studied the

* A further explanation of this would take me beyond the limits I have prescribed to myself, as it would involve a long illustration. On some future occasion, however, I purpose giving my views on the subject.

subject, and although Dr. Arnott is right in some of his surmises, he has not given any advice that can possibly be of assistance to more than a very few; as we scarcely ever meet with a case having the closing of the glottis as its sole cause: and the unpleasant effect of prefixing a continuous vowel sound before words,* would be considered by some to be worse than the impediment. We rarely meet with a person at all advanced in life, or even arrived at maturity, that has a *single* cause as the source of his infirmity. In young patients sometimes we find a single cause to produce stuttering; but not, as I before said, in those who have had the habit for any length of time.

In very young children the defect is often slight and simple; as they grow older it gradually becomes more complicated; and when the sufferer is entering on life, and is obliged to mix for the first time in society, we find that it assumes the acute form; until, at last, he becomes hardened to the world, and gains confidence in himself; when his defect gradually lessens, and after a time becomes chronic; resolving itself into certain difficulties of which he is himself conscious. This is not the case with younger persons, in whom the difficulty is constantly changing. I could illustrate this by a number of examples; but any one will find, on questioning a stammerer, that his difficult words or letters are continually altering. Others have no particular letters which they find a greater

* Recommended by Dr. Arnott in his *Elements of Physics*.

trouble in articulating. Some persons cannot pronounce certain letters nearly as easily as the rest, although they are quite unconscious of the fact; and it is only by an analysis of the words at which they stammer, that we can arrive at the immediate cause: although even a discovery of this will only act as *diagnosis*, the real difficulty being often obscured, and requiring something more than an explanation of the mechanical action of the organs of articulation, before they can be freed from difficulty of utterance. I do not intend to give here any particular notice of articulate sounds, because I believe it would be of no real importance or value to the stammerer. A study of this subject is, of course, necessary for the teacher, although nothing but *vivâ voce* instruction can convey, with any success, such researches to the public. It is an easy science when orally explained; but becomes the most abstruse and intricate, when illustrations are attempted in writing. In this opinion I should be supported by the most enlightened and intelligent writers, if they would examine into the practical part of the subject.

This brings me to the consideration of the benefit that has been, and can be, derived from books professing to lay down a system for the cure of stammering, from whatever cause it arises. Persons who have not duly reflected on the subject, and ignorant that stammering does not arise from *one*, but *many* causes, have been disappointed that I have not given some definite instructions,

for the removal of all defects of the vocal organs ! I not only, however, justify the course I have hitherto adopted, and the truth of which I have always endeavoured to promulgate, and I would wish to enforce on my reader (especially if a stammerer) to avoid all such books, as the harm they do is incalculable, especially to the nervous and sensitive sufferer. This is not merely a theoretical opinion, but the result of experience in the cases of many pupils, who have studied every work on the subject of their affliction ; grasping eagerly at the various systems therein laid down, by which they hoped to free themselves from their torment ! The effect has been to produce such a morbid and confused state of mind,—from continued disappointment,—as to render them, in some cases, both disgusted with their infirmity, and incredulous as to the existence of any remedy likely to relieve them. Some writers have been tempted by the best and most charitable motives in sending forth their opinions, and have been quite unconscious of any harm that could possibly result from their books ; yet, I have not the least hesitation in asserting, that the mischief they have done (by applying, as it were, a poison to the mind,) is far greater than any benefit that, in a few exceptional cases, have been received. The striking peculiarity discoverable on perusing a collection of these publications is this :—each book gives *entirely different directions* on the course to be pursued for the desired end ; yet each asserts the infallibility of its own

peculiar theory, or gives such a complicated description of the subject, that it cannot be understood; and the only point discoverable, is its utter unintelligibility to the general reader. All this is likely to produce a mystification on the subject, and thus tends to envelop the science in greater obscurity than actually surrounds it.

Some remedies that have been recommended are most absurd; such, for example, as *speaking through the nose, intoning, and talking with the teeth closed*. All these have been tried by persons in due course; and the last of them was announced only a short time since, as a certain remedy! Some of my pupils have acknowledged making the trial of this unnatural method. The result has been frequently the increase of the disorder to a considerable degree; and adding another bad habit to the already existing defects.

It would be out of place here to discuss the injurious effect that an unnecessary extirpation of the tonsils has on the constitution; which I could shew, by a number of cases, where the health has sympathized with the operation to a great extent, especially the generative organs. There is, however, another operation, and comparatively a simple and harmless one, that is often performed, *viz.*: cutting the *fremen linguæ*. This is frequently done to young children, and often too severely; and the result is, that these children at a future day are more liable than others to defective speech. I have traced the origin of some cases to have

been in a great degree attributable to this seemingly harmless operation.

The organs of speech are more intimately connected with the mind, than any other bodily function; hence it is we find that, occasionally, a favourable result follows some severe cutting process; and as long as the pain and excitement are kept up, we see the patient free from stuttering; but immediately that stimulus is gone, he has nothing that will abstract his mind from his infirmity, and he relapses into his old habit. On this supposition, together with the fact that stammerers can very often speak when they are not thinking of their difficulty, some writers have proposed, as a system for the removal, that all persons thus afflicted should abstract their minds from their infirmity. This does not answer in nearly all cases; and even if it did, it would be impossible to carry such a system into daily practice, and it can only be classed with other absurd and impossible things that have, at different times, been recommended.

In extreme cases of mental abstraction and excitement, we find occasionally that fluent speech is given for the time; but in the majority of cases it is quite the reverse, especially if the person is labouring under *fear*, which is known to stop the secretions, especially of the salivary glands, causing a dryness in the mouth.* Nor is it alone the

* It is a custom in India to detect a thief in a household by making each member chew some rice grains; and the guilty one is discovered by

stutterer who is often rendered unable to speak under its influence. The most trivial thing will often obstruct an elegant flow of language, and overthrow an entire chain of thought, causing an utter incapability of pronouncing a word at will; as instance Macbeth:—

“But wherefore could I not pronounce
Amen? I had most need of blessing; and Amen
Stuck in my throat!”

If this happens to the orator, how much more likely, are such emotions to influence the person who has no control over his speech? The stammerer is quite unconscious when he will be able to speak, for his relentless enemy has him under complete subjection, and persecutes him by preventing his speaking when he most desires it. The reader who does not suffer from difficulty of utterance, cannot estimate the pain caused by these unsuccessful attempts on the most important or embarrassing occasions. The sufferer trusts to time to relieve him; but finding years pass without experiencing relief, he gradually gives way to all the miseries and diseases incident to continued melancholy, pining over his useless position, and loss of social influence. It is as necessary to try to prevent the sufferer from sinking into this desponding state, as to apply any system for his relief. Seneca tells us that “every man thinks his own

their remaining dry in his mouth. This sensation of difficulty in swallowing food under excitement, will be recognized by nearly every nervous person.

burden the heaviest;" and this is generally the case with the stammerer, and frequently with truth.

Those whose minds are ever brooding over one subject gradually become deficient in excitement, or, in other words, melancholy, the effect of which, on the animal economy is to produce dyspepsia, and in extreme cases, hypochondriasis; and from these I have found not a few of my pupils to be suffering. Some have fancied that they had no lungs, and would sink in the water; others, that there was a tumour in the throat; and a few that satanic influence was continually exercised over them. Certain persons, or places, would become their aversion, and the fact of their seeing some of these enemies, would make them speak worse for a month afterwards. An eminent French writer, Esquirol,* speaking of the mischief produced by concentrating the mind on one subject, says:—"Oneness of thought renders the actions of the melancholic uniformly slow. He refuses, indeed, all motion, and passes his days in solitude and idleness. The secretions are no longer performed, or present remarkable disorders; the skin is acrid, with a dry, burning heat; transpiration has ceased in the body, while the skin is bathed in sweat."

This accounts, to a great extent, for the derangement of bodily health, that we nearly always find in cases of Psellimus. It must be explained that there are two great classes of stammerers—

Esquirol, *Mental Maladies*, translated by E. K. Hunt, M.D. Published in 1845 at Philadelphia.

the sensitive and the careless—it is only to the first class that my remarks apply, although they will be found on enquiry to be by far the most numerous.

Many persons thus suffering are stigmatized as lazy, careless, irritable and stupid. In the majority of cases I do not hesitate to say, that when persons are either of the above it is the effect of their disorder, and, on that being removed, it gradually disappears. Some, indeed, are apt to look on stammerers generally as a set of imbeciles, and persons deficient in mental capacity. Although I admit that the temper of the patient often becomes irritable from continual annoyances, and that he exhibits signs of indolence that convey the impression of stupidity, I have seen sufficient to convince me that, in general, this is no more than would occur to any other persons similarly circumstanced. We often find brilliant qualities thus obscured; but, when the enemy is withdrawn, and sufficient time allowed for him to regain his shattered health and mental vigour, he not only *equals*, but rises *superior* to his companions, and no longer fettered by a sense of his infirmity, we see him rise to eminence, and shine forth to the admiration of the world. In society, where before he could not articulate a sentence, we behold him speaking with ease and pleasure, and, to quote the words of no fictitious character, “I feel,” said he, “that a new life and a fresh world are before me.” In some instances, where oral communica-

tion is denied, the sufferer resigns himself to the conviction that his only medium of communication with his fellow man is by means of his pen, and he devotes his whole energies to literature, thus we frequently owe to a stammerer some of our finest literary productions. We rarely meet with old persons who stammer, and this I account for, not because they grow out of it, but from the fact that very frequently a functional disease is excited by the continual misuse of the organs, which brings many a promising youth to a premature grave. The nervous system nearly always becomes deranged; and we often find that an involuntary action of certain organs had been excited by continual misuse; and thus organic disease is the result. Hence the mistake that has been made by some, who have called stammering itself a disease; confounding the reaction with the original cause.

The action on the young is very often to stop the growth; and the majority of cases we find either of small stature or a delicate constitution; and the effect of a removal of the impediment in such cases is very marked, and can only be believed by those who have witnessed it.* I have known youths to grow two inches in three months;

* We have some reason to believe that the formative power of the tissues themselves may be diminished, so as to check the process of nutrition, even when the plastic material is supplied;—and a diminution of it in that irritable state of the system which results from excessive and prolonged bodily exertion or anxiety of mind.”—*Carpenter's Human Physiology*.

and this is to be accounted for by the nourishment acting in a natural manner on the system, which before was unduly appropriated to the support of the misused organs.

The effect mental emotion has over physical function, is generally known only to those who have experienced it themselves, or witnessed it in others. If we examine closely into the feelings of stammerers, we find that the real state of their mind, is not known to their nearest and dearest friends. They often disguise, under an air of indifference and tranquility, the anguish of their hearts at their miserable infirmity. Some seek to drown the sense of their sorrows by debauchery; and it is painful to state, that not a few have given way to various excesses, and lost all self respect. The exciting influence of alchohol and the narcotic of tobacco, has too often been resorted to, and many a sad tale can be told of unfortunate fellows, whose ruin has been the result of endeavours to drown thought by dissipation. Others, on the contrary, become misanthropic, pining in solitude over their distress, dreading and shunning the intercourse with society, natural to their youth and position; and when an interview with any person is inevitable, the fear of breaking down in their efforts to speak, will prey on their minds for days and weeks beforehand.

It is indeed a melancholy spectacle to see a youth, born to a good position, of fine intellect and amiable disposition, cast aside as a being unfit

to hold a responsible place in society, or to occupy himself with any pursuit in life.

The mistaken belief that this affliction is hereditary, has been a great source of suffering to both sexes, and the cause of many a sincere attachment being abandoned. It is true that a great many instances can be adduced where the defect has descended for several generations, and I have myself had several children thus afflicted out of one family where the parents stammered. Yet I contend that such instances can be accounted for, as being the effect of *Imitation*. There are, of course, other causes, such as slight physical deformity, that will always tend to cause a defective utterance; but I have certainly been able to trace by far the greater proportion of cases, to the prodigious influence of imitation. One stammerer in a family is quite sufficient to inoculate the rest; and so facile is the contagion, to the sensitive mind of a child, that I have had many pupils who have contracted the habit, by a single interview with a stammerer.

When the habit is first contracted, it is comparatively slight and easy of removal; and either little notice is taken of the first inclination to stammer, or the child is severely punished for it. Instead of this a middle course should be adopted, and kindness, with determination, should be employed to check the stammer in its embryo. It is very difficult for persons not intimately acquainted with the various causes and symptoms, to detect

the difference between real and pretended stammering; for, while the idle have not unfrequently endeavoured to deceive their preceptors, by affecting to stammer in order to avoid some task, many a poor fellow, really afflicted, has suffered great injustice. It is to be regretted that youths should ever attempt this sort of deception; and I most strongly warn them against either stammering in mimicry, or for the baser purpose of deceiving, as I have had pupils who have confessed their serious impediment to be the result of one of these practices. Imitation is in children the root of all habits; and parents cannot be too careful to select nurses, and teachers, free from any defect of speech. I would urge the expediency of there being some defined standard for such persons; and I believe we should not see so many instances of defective speech, were this point more particularly attended to. The large proportion of persons who have not the correct use of their vocal mechanism, is mainly owing to the careless manner in which children are first taught to speak. The ridiculous lisp of one, the dropping of the letter *r* of another, and a host of minor defects, are to be often traced to the nursery, or, to the constant association of the child, with a parent having the same peculiarities,—and is the simple result of imitation.*

* Circumstances of this character occur thus :—A deservedly esteemed servant in every other respect, who has the misfortune to stammer, (and might be set right in a month), is retained as a favourite in a young household. The consequence is that every child stammers; at first, perhaps, only a laugh to papa or mamma, the infant imitates nurse; but a fatal

These defects, are, however, removed with great ease, especially in young persons; and of all the cases of lisping and incapability of articulating the letter *r* that have come under my notice, I do not hesitate to say, that, there never has been one which has not readily given way to a few days *viva voce* instruction: and if this fact was more disseminated, I imagine so many persons would not allow themselves to be troubled with such annoying peculiarities.

I cannot too strongly reprimand the injustice a parent commits, often unconsciously, on a child, in fancying that he will grow out of his impediment. Such is not the case in one out of a hundred. Indeed, the cure of stammering in young children is effected with the greatest ease and certainty. A child should be freed from his defect as soon as he is able to read; and all cases should be placed under treatment before they are twelve years of age, as the earlier they are cured the more certain is it to be lasting. It is quite erroneous to imagine that children are unable to carry out instructions which are necessary. The defect in young children is often apparently severe, but I have never found a case that presented any difficulty, although a longer time is generally re-

obstacle to the success in life of the poor children who have so heedlessly been infected with this impediment. One, as I have shown, cannot enter the church; another cannot pass for the army or navy; a third must try chamber practice instead of the grand ambition of the bar; and all (I do not apply it of course to any family, but as a general truth) because there has been in a young household a parent or leading domestic who indulged the pleasure, or did not check the habit of stammering.

quired to effect a perfect and permanent cure. I have made such arrangements in my treatment of these cases, that their education is scarcely interrupted. No children should be sent to school until the impediment is overcome, as it is nearly always greatly aggravated under such circumstances.

It is almost universally believed that Psellismus is entirely a nervous disorder, caused by the derangement of organs which the application of a voluntary system cannot benefit. It has also been asserted to be the result of a wrong action of the involuntary muscles.

Dr. M. Hall states that stammering is generally the effect of emotion; and he has thrown great light on the functions of the nervous system by his researches, especially by the discovery of the reflex action.* I shall not attempt to controvert theories brought forward by former writers, but I cannot refrain from expressing my opinion, that this disorder has always been considered—too exclusively—caused by the nerves. On close examination, we find that if some nerves are affected, certainly others are not. It has been ascertained that if we divide the nerves between the larynx and brain, the power of speech is lost; and this may lead to the conclusion that the nerves perform an important part in speech. A weakness, and, in

* *Id est* those nerves that have no direct communication with the brain, but have their communication through the medulla oblongata, as the par vagum, the chief nerve of the larynx. But reflex action is questionable in many cases.

some instances, a deficiency in the nervous centres, will doubtless cause a defective utterance. Persons stammer more or less in cholera, paralysis, epilepsy, apoplexy, hysteria, and hydrophobia. Without going into any particulars, I assert that I do not believe stammering to be ever originally created by a nervous constitution. Neither do I think that nervousness, in the common acceptation of the term, is ever the direct cause. I have continually used the term Mind, and I do so in its broadest sense, comprehending the faculties conscience, imagination, instinct, memory, reason, and will. The mysterious connection of mind with matter I will not attempt to unravel. I think, however, the only way the nerves are concerned or connected with stammering is, that they are the organs by which the mind influences the bodily functions, and therefore, must not be considered as the original cause if they are able to perform their duty. Most stammerers are quite free from any nervous affection; and some that think the nerves to be the cause of their difficulty; are quite conscious that it is only in speaking before particular persons that they ever find any impediment. There must always be an improper physical action, to account for any stammering, however slight; and not until this is conquered can we apply any system for speaking with less emotion. It is, perhaps, excited by the mind; but I contend that this can never be the real cause. When we lose control over the mind, we do so over the bodily organs that are under its

influence. This is shewn by all those diseases of the brain I have mentioned; and also when persons are under the influence of violent passion, which utterly deprives them of the power of voluntary action. It is quite a mistake to suppose that the act of breathing for speaking is an involuntary one. Ordinary inspiration may be, but the other will be found to be the reverse, and is entirely a voluntary effort, however unconscious we may be of the fact. The mind requires a healthy regimen to remove all the scepticism and mistrust that we meet with; and it is necessary to instil what has hitherto been deficient, *viz.*:—confidence. Fear has always had the complete control over both mental and physical functions; and until this can be removed or greatly diminished, we cannot implant confidence.

Those persons who stammer under the influence of fear, do so only from habit or association, and not from timidity of character or constitution. Were the same individuals called upon to perform any action requiring the greatest intrepidity or courage (not involving an effort of speech), they would not feel the slightest sensation of timidity, but possibly distinguish themselves by their bravery. Many of the most sensitive mental stammerers are among the daring spirits whose highest enjoyment consists in field sports, or manly exercises of all kinds; and not unfrequently such cases exist among soldiers or sailors of acknowledged merit.

There are, however, exceptional cases where the

whole nervous system is so entirely deranged that every action of life is under its influence; and it is a matter of discussion whether this excessive nervousness can be entirely cured. That it can be alleviated, there can be no doubt; but, we have yet to know more of its functions before we can say that this innate nervousness can be eradicated. I am certain, however, that sufficient can be effected, to prevent its interfering with the act of speech. Most persons lose the power of articulation under excitement, because they are ignorant how to regulate their vocal apparatus on such occasions. The mind wanders, the nerves refuse their office, and all power of speech is gone! But if persons have sufficient strength of mind to prevent its wandering, with knowledge how the act of speech is performed, and are able to put it into practice, they can speak with ease under all circumstances. I have had pupils who, on rising to speak, would tremble, and their knees knock together, and yet articulate fluently, when they had the key to the cause of their stammering. A pupil may be as frightened or nervous as possible, yet if he can control the *mind*, he can the *speech*, as the nerves cannot prevent articulation against physical force.

Excessive grief will take away the power of speech; and if grief and fear predominate over hope and faith, it is the more necessary to diminish the former, and increase the confidence of the patient. But how is this to be accomplished?

I before stated that no person stammers without some physical cause for it—not necessarily an organic defect—but a simple misuse of perfect organs. Our first object, then, must be to discover what organs are thus unnaturally used, and we shall observe, that while some organs are scarcely used at all, others are employed with too great force. In nearly all cases there is an irregular action, and an entire want of harmony among the different parts. A sufferer is quite unconscious why he stammers, being only aware of the emotion exciting the attack, whether anxiety, fear, grief, or a variety of others. On explaining to him the cause or causes of his stammering, and pointing out the manner in which the voice is created, and the reason he has a difficulty of utterance, the sufferer often exclaims, “I wonder I never discovered this before!” And in many cases the change is like magic, although simply effected by the instructor having discovered the secret of detecting the cause or origin of the evil; and being also able to communicate to the person, a simple means by which he can correct, and, by careful practice, entirely overcome it. The mind readily embraces the obvious conviction that there is a cause independent of association.

The given instructions require, of course, practice, according to the severity of the case, and the length of time the habit has existed, with the most unremitting zeal and attention on the part of the pupil to ensure success. It cannot, indeed,

be reasonably expected that a habit of many years' standing, can be eradicated without great care and perseverance. The constant and immediate superintendence of an instructor, experienced in a system founded on physiological principles, is the only method of entirely conquering this defect: the most elaborate efforts at written explanations, being obviously valueless, where cases so widely differ, and, consequently, require such various instructions. Even Mr. Bishop, who has written on the subject, and occupied many pages with unintelligible directions, for self-cure by a system which is quite unnatural, and more fit to be given by a singing master, confesses that "It was, however, found very difficult for the patient to practise this exercise without assistance." Very few persons possess sufficient mental control to keep a constant check on their speaking, or to be aware of the manner in which they are using their vocal organs, especially when first directed to alter their original method of exercising them. Some individuals, also, are quite ignorant how severely they stammer, having become so habituated to it, as not to be aware when they are stammering. The time occupied to restore nature to her throne, must, therefore, depend entirely on the pupil, and his progress will be in accordance with his own efforts. Some are too confident on finding the success that attends them at first, and, then they often give up the practice of the prescribed system, and find themselves gradually

relapsing into the old way, not considering that the habit of a few days will not supersede that of many years. Too much care and attention cannot be paid, as the enemy is always on the alert to regain his former power, and seizes every moment of forgetfulness to reassert his position: until at length the new habit so completely takes the place of the old, that the pupil forgets how he stammered. Some stammerers have a great muscular weakness, and require more energy than others, but this they are unwilling to use in conversation, fearing it will be remarked. For this, however, there is not the smallest ground, as the system I adopt is perfectly natural, and entirely free from every kind of peculiarity, and could not be noticed by the most acute observer. There is nothing difficult to understand, and the most ordinary intellect can carry into practice, all the instructions with a common amount of attention. That cases of relapse have occasionally occurred I will not attempt to deny, but it is satisfactory to know that each one to whom this has happened, when speaking conscientiously, owns that not the *system*, but his own *carelessness* is alone to blame, and most sincerely he deplores the ground he has lost. In order, however, to prevent relapse, it has been my study and aim, to bring the system to such a state of perfection that no such charge can be brought against it. Since the commencement of the practice of this system (now thirty years ago), if I were to average that in *one-tenth* of the cases treated

there has been a slight relapse, I should I am sure overstate the number, and this average may be said to include a few cases where an entire cure has not been effected, from sheer carelessness or obstinacy on the part of the pupil, and which would occur, whatever the system applied. The most sceptical author* as to the curability of stammering, says:—"Some scheme should be instituted by which the stammerer should gradually acquire, through changed associations, a complete power over his speech under all circumstances." This it has been my object for some time past to carry out fully and perfectly, by my present improved mode of practice, affording, where it is desirable, residence in my house, and the constant advantage of practice in reading and speaking on all subjects before others; of this I have made an important point, as so many find it impossible to address an intelligible sentence before a few persons assembled together, and only constant practice will overcome this difficulty.

Very sensitive pupils are apt to doubt themselves, and fail in consequence of sheer timidity. But when they observe the successful adherence to the same system, as that in which they have been instructed, the conviction is forced upon their minds: that they need only follow the same course, and the same happiness will await and repay their application.

Great improvements are being daily made in

* In a pamphlet on *Stammering*, attributed to the pen of Dr. Munro.

every department of science, and the study and attention I have paid to this particular subject I trust have not been without their fruit; and each year's experience discovers more clearly to the anxious observer the innumerable phases, under which this affliction presents itself; and the practicability of its eradication.

The art of speaking is far more mechanical than most persons believe, and the fluent speaker is not at all aware of its beautiful complication. Yet all these organs are placed under the control of our will, and it is ignorance of their functions, not any fault in the organs themselves, that produces such numberless defects. As I before stated, nothing can be more exquisitely simple than the mechanism of the human voice, and it is only by a study of the laws of nature, that we have advanced thus far, in bringing to perfection a method by which the meanest capacity may, in a short time, be relieved, from one of the most distressing among the many "ills that flesh is heir to," and enabled to employ the beautiful machinery that God has given him, for the great purpose designed by his Creator—the production of articulate speech.

A NOTICE
OF THE
LIFE OF THE LATE THOMAS HUNT,
WITH
A GENERAL ACCOUNT OF THE
PLANS THAT HAVE BEEN ADOPTED FOR THE CURE OF
STAMMERING.

THE late Thomas Hunt was born in Dorsetshire in 1802. His progenitors and family were connected with the Church of England; and he was educated at Winchester, and Trinity College, Cambridge, with a view to a similar provision in holy orders.

Besides his discovery of a system for the cure of stammering, and independently of what he himself demonstrated : his efforts had the beneficial effect of directing public attention to the remedy of a disorder, previously held to be incurable, or simply suffered to pass as a natural infirmity not amenable to rational treatment.

While at Cambridge a very different turn was given to his studies, by the affliction of a schoolfellow ; and, without proceeding to a degree, he left College with the determination to devote himself to that pursuit, which soon became the engrossing business of his life. Having satisfied himself by several successful cases, he made a provincial tour, in order to confirm his opinions by greater experience ; and fortified by the results of his tuition (for it never affected medicine, and might, if begun at an early period of life in the pupils—*not* the patients—be styled simply educational), he settled in the metropolis.

He experienced, to the full, all the difficulties which usually

attend the establishment of a new theory. It had no extravagance to recommend it and startle the public into notice; but, simple and unobtrusive, it appealed to common sense and ordinary reason; and had, therefore, to win—not to strike its way. This perfect simplicity was, at first, adverse to his progress; and even to the last, was not without an effect disadvantageous to the general recognition of the obvious principles on which he acted. It wounds the self-love of clever men to be told “if you had only thought of this palpable truism, you would have spared yourself all your difficulties and annoyances;” and the ignorant are astonished to find by a few hours’ advice (founded on careful observation) that they are converted into species of miracles among their wondering brethren. The one class is vexed, the other confounded; and between the two, the teacher is treated like Columbus with the egg, or Katterfelto with a charm. It had also the quack nostrums of the day to encounter; and metallic apparatus, India-rubber substrata for the tongue, various surgical operations, combinations of physic with monotonous singing, drawling pronounciation, and other contrivances more or less absurd and inhuman, were vigorously opposed by those who had interest in them, to the obvious and intelligible doctrines now for the first time promulgated. The advocates for the knife upheld the fiercest pretensions in the first instance, and waged their sanguinary war the longest.

I may mention that in the course of my father’s practice he was often much perplexed with the question of printing and publishing testimonials of his success. Gratifying beyond measure as these have been from men distinguished in the highest stations and liberal professions, and especially from most eminent medical authorities, there was, nevertheless, a repugnance felt to adopt the medium which is so extensively abused in every branch of enterprise, and which is equally the resort of truth and honesty, and of falsehood and fraud. But the apology, if any be necessary, is the great difficulty of making any discovery, if in a new line of science, even partially known by other means, so as to acquire for it public hearing, and entitle it to public consideration: and almost a similar embarrassment attends personal explanations. To be sincere

and candid where results may be doubtful, and to avoid what may appear like undue confidence and boasting, frequently create positions painful to an honourable mind; for on such occasions it is desirable alike, to avoid hurting the feelings of others, and doing injustice to your own.

Their simplicity, and, generally, immediate efficacy, have elicited much admiration from men whose praise "is praise indeed;" but he did suffer, as I have suffered, somewhat from the converse—for pupils and their friends and relations have exclaimed "it is so easy," that they fancy the remuneration of laborious devotedness to one object should be measured by the time and trouble of a few hours' instruction, to be afterwards confirmed by no long period of probationary exercise and superintendence.

In spite of all obstacles, however, Mr. Hunt's system gradually rose in public estimation, and the evidence of its great success became too convincing to be withstood. Hundreds of pupils, with unhesitating and distinct voices, bore witness to its efficacy, and the testimony of eminent and honourable gentlemen in every branch of the medical profession, liberally corroborated the accuracy of the statements—confirming by science what was uttered by gratitude. The triumph of truth was very provoking, and very virulent attacks upon Mr. Hunt were the consequence. Thus assailed, though actuated by no sordid notions, but inspired with intense delight in alleviating the distressed who came to him for succour, he, perhaps, attached even more than due importance, to the accumulation of the testimonials, which rewarded his labours from every quarter.

In the midst of so much quackery and pretention, the late Mr. Robert Liston, to his everlasting praise, stepped before the public, and raised his voice against any further needless mutilation. Such was the power and truth of Mr. Liston's opinion, that the public at once saw the delusion that had been practised on them; and it was only natural that he should attach great value to such a voluntary testimony as the following, coming, as it did, from one of the greatest surgeons and most successful operators the world ever saw; and one, too, who was scrupulously chary in affording his sanction or applause to aught, either pro-

fessional or general, which his enlightened judgment did not conscientiously approve : and to the last he showed his perfect confidence, by recommending medical and other pupils to Mr. Hunt's tuition :—

“I have with much pleasure witnessed Mr. Hunt's process for the removal of stammering. It is founded on correct physiological principles, is simple, efficacious, and unattended by pain or inconvenience. Several young persons have, in my presence, been brought to him for the first time ; some of them could not utter a sentence, however short, without hesitation and frightful contortion of the features. In less than half an hour, by following Mr. Hunt's instructions, they have been able to speak and to read continuously long passages without difficulty. Some of these individuals had previously been subjected to *painful and unwarrantable incisions*, and had been left *with their palates horribly mutilated, hesitating in their speech, and stuttering as before.*

“ROBERT LISTON.”

“5, Clifford Street, March 1, 1842.”

Such a testimony from such a source, requires little comment ; its effect on the upholders of mutilation was severe in the extreme ; but truth and justice will prevail in the end ; and thus it was in this instance ; not, however, without calling forth some abusive and personal attacks on its author. The high mind of Mr. Liston cared nothing for such abuse, as he knew the party from whence it came ; and he allowed himself to be abused without notice, in a most philosophic manner : and, indeed, his position permitted him to treat his vituperators with complete indifference and contempt. I have in my possession some interesting letters written on the occasion by this gentleman, which give a good illustration of his mind, and *sang froid* manner of dealing with such persons ; and if it were not for their personal character, I would give them insertion in this Memoir. It can scarcely be believed at the present period, how fierce this controversy was. Indeed, at one time surgical operations were becoming the daily practice by those who were only too glad to acquire practice and fees, by what they called a “sure and

certain cure for all cases of stammering." Some of these practitioners do not like to be reminded of their entire failure; but I should not be doing my duty, were I not to record the success of my father's exertions over the absurd operations that were becoming generally adopted. The exposure of this practice did not gain him any goodwill from its partizans, who did all in their power to prevent the public having confidence in such a simple mode of practice, as he upheld and adopted. Cooper* says "There is more real merit in removing the necessity for the practice of any one severe operation already familiarly adopted, than in the performance of a hundred new ones:" and I take credit for my father, that he was the instrument by which some of these mutilations were abolished.

Of the severity of these operations I shall content myself by giving the language of a living surgeon.† A detailed account would be too revolting, and tend to place some surgeons in a position in which we could look on them with little respect or confidence. He says the operation, "which consists either in the division of the muscles of the tongue at its root, cutting at the same time through the linguales, genio-hyo glossi, and styloglossi muscles, with their blood-vessels, and nerves; or in cutting a transverse wedge-shaped slice out of the dorsum of the tongue; we may easily conceive the danger of hemorrhage, and sloughing, which must result from such operations. It appears, indeed, to be wholly unjustifiable for surgeons thus to inflict wounds and mutilate organs upon mere hypothesis, more especially when the practice is at variance with the physiology of the parts concerned in the defects of speech intended to be relieved." These remarks describe, in a very mild manner, these horrible mutilations; and we cannot be surprised that they should have called forth the denunciation, which they have received from all parties. It is to be regretted that persons with a diploma from the College of Surgeons, should be allowed to commit these needless operations on a credulous public with impunity. If they had not that cloak to hide their ignorance such operations would be described as butchery! And it is a

* Cooper's *First Lines of Surgery*.

† Mr. Bishop.

matter of consideration how far persons should be believed or trusted after they have been guilty of such vital mistakes.

At that time there was a great dispute who should claim the honour of the supposed discovery of a cure for stammering by mutilation ; and an eminent periodical, commenting on the subject, mentions :—"A certain Mr. Braid, who, in his 'Treatise on Talipes, Strabismus, Stammering,' &c. asserts his title to be considered the real Simon Pure of this tragedy, or rather the Scrub of this comedy ; for he says—'Deiffenbach and Yearsley have been represented as the first who devised and practised effective operations for the cure of stuttering ; but whatever merit is due to any one in that respect, I have an undoubted right to claim for myself, having operated for that complaint by division of the *frænum linguæ* and *genio-glossi* muscles, and in other cases by the excision of the tonsils and amputation of the uvula, three months prior to any of them ; Professor Deiffenbach's first operation having been performed on the 7th of January last (1841) ; Yearsley's in December (1839) ; and mine (Mr. Braid's) in September (1839).'"

Their subsequent results are not known, but I believe that many a promising youth has been brought to a premature grave by such mutilation. I have met with many persons who have informed me that their general health has sympathized to a very great extent. I will, however, content myself by giving one case on my own testimony, and corroborate my own and my father's opinion on this point, with some better authorities.

Mr. W. D. was operated on eleven years ago, by having his tonsils entirely extirpated, and the whole of his uvula taken off. He informed me that after the operation inflammation was set up, and he was rendered unable to swallow for some days. He had never, he said, been well since the operation ; and it had made him slightly deaf. He was never able to breathe, except through the nose, for if he did he would be sure to cough. The operation excited him, and increased his stammering ; and he was rendered quite unable to articulate the letter *r*, which he could do easily before. After about three weeks tuition and residence with me, he conquered his impediment ; but the want of his uvula, prevented him from getting

rid of his unpleasant manner of speaking, caused by his being obliged to inflate the lungs through the nose when speaking. He informed me his impediment was slight, and his general health excellent, prior to the mutilation; and he did not believe his tonsils were enlarged, or his uvula elongated.

The above is one of many cases who have been deluded in the vain hope of benefit, and who have had in after life severely to suffer for their credulity. The mind of stammerers is generally in such a state, that they do not object to go through any operation, if they were certain that it would for ever erase their infirmity; therefore it was not surprising that many should avail themselves of the relief offered. It is a practice with some of these parties, even at the present day, to assert that the tonsils and uvula are both productive of stammering in some few instances; but such I entirely disbelieve to be the case; and my experience (with the result of my father's practice, who had the most extended opportunity of judging,) assures me, that such is an erroneous view. It is true that this state may exist in combination with defective utterance, and may increase the obstruction, but I deny its being the original cause, or directly producing a stutter; and therefore the removal can never cure. I quote from Mr. Bishop's work in proof, who thus writes of the mental effect of the operation, which agrees with what I have before asserted. "It is not, then, surprising that the extirpation of portions of the tongue, tonsils, uvula, and velum, should produce such a degree of mental excitement as to control for a time the vocal mechanism; but, after the excitement of the operation has passed away, the unhappy sufferers relapse into their former state of imperfect articulation."

The whole subject of operations of this nature, especially the effect produced by the excision of the tonsils, is ably handled by Mr. Harvey,* in his work on the throat; and who has the advantage of speaking with very extended experience on this point. I would strongly advise all persons to consult this book before they allow themselves to be operated on, for what may

* On *Excision of the Enlarged Tonsils and its Consequences*, by William Harvey, F.R.C.S. Surgeon to the Royal Dispensary for Diseases of the Ear.—H. Renshaw, 365, Strand.

only be *symptoms*; and remembering also the derangement of the general health may and *does* follow. Persons who have written on "Throat Ailments" have attempted to show the benefit derived from extirpation of the tonsils and uvula. Their office is not understood,—but supposed by some not to fill any part in the animal economy.

The following case, related by Mr. Harvey, I quote as an illustration, and is selected from a host of similar cases:—"A young lady, about eighteen years of age, had the tonsils removed for apparent obstruction, as well as for some thickness of the voice: she was of a ruddy complexion, and the *mammæ* were well developed. A few days after the operation her health became deranged, her bosom sunk, and great disturbance was complained of in the other functions." Here there can be no doubt of the close connexion between the mammary gland and the tonsils.

The following is intimately connected with my subject, and affords a remarkable warning to all persons who may contemplate an operation, or fancy that such an ordeal would be of any service:—

"Master W. aged twelve, had his tonsils *removed for stammering*. He had no sensible defect in his hearing prior to this operation; but in two months after, a perceptible impairment was observed in this function; and although a variety of treatment was adopted, with reference to Eustachian passages, which were supposed to have been obstructed, and other constitutional means were also resorted to, he has not derived *the least benefit with respect to his speech; but his hearing remains impaired up to the present time.*"

In another place Mr. Harvey very justly says, "Another defect for which removal of these bodies has been most strangely and unaccountably suggested is defective utterance. Now, how such an expedient for removing that painful and distressing condition could ever enter the mind of any one, I cannot conceive." I should not have taken up so much space in the exposition of this operation, if it were not for the general prevailing idea that these functions can be removed with impunity. That the operation of taking off the elongated uvula, is also quite useless, there is more than proof given in the pages

from which I have quoted. Experience has shown me that inflamed tonsils and elongated uvula are often accompanied with stammering, and on that being removed, this state generally ceases. The continual misuse of these functions, and violent action of the breath, which we often find in stammering, are quite sufficient causes to produce this result, and is therefore only the *effect* of stammering, or any other defect in the speech: and on the cause being removed, the effect will cease. Such is an admitted professional axiom. Hundreds of cases who, even at the present time, are submitting to having their tonsils removed for thickness in the speech, could have spared themselves the trouble, pain, and annoyance of such a doubtful operation, if they had been informed how to use their voice to the greatest advantage, and not abuse the organs with which they are endowed. This state is often found in young persons, more particularly if they have grown fast; but they grow out of it in time, when there is no immediate cause except general weakness. In proof of this assertion I quote from Mr. Vincent, who says, "I have seen very many exceedingly enlarged tonsils, producing the greatest annoyance in patients at fifteen or twenty years of age, which have gradually shrunk or assumed the natural size by the time that the subject had arrived at the age of thirty. If we consider the great utility of these glands in secreting a mucus of a peculiarly lubricating kind, so valuable in the economy of deglutition, I cannot regard it as a good practice to remove these parts so unsparingly as I have known to be often done."

The efforts that my father made to put a stop to surgical operations, were, after a time, successful. It is now many years since the operation for cutting a transverse wedge out of the tongue was performed in London: but the excision of the tonsils is still effected in some cases, together with the extirpation of the elongated uvula, the effect of which on the general health, I think I have fully illustrated; and hundreds of poor sufferers tell a sad tale of what has been entailed on them by this operation. The resort to such severe measures was doubtless the result of the entire inefficiency of all the means that had formerly been adopted. And after Mr. Hunt had shown

the absurdity of these operations, in which he was supported by all the highest medical authorities of the day, public attention began to be directed to his mode of cure. About this time it curiously happened that Francis, when he shot at her Majesty, was witnessed by Pearson, and had he been able to give the alarm, the danger might have been averted.

The *Times* of June 25, 1842, remarks, "It will be recollected that a lad named Pearson, one of the persons who witnessed the treasonable attempt upon the Queen's life on the Sunday afternoon, was afflicted with so inveterate a habit of stammering as to be unable even to give an alarm. He has, we are informed, by means of a new process of cure, obtained the power of perfect articulation; the hesitation, which before rendered him scarcely intelligible, even when not excited, having entirely disappeared."

The following letter from Sir Peter Laurie, Knt. and Ald. explains the circumstance:—"It gives me much pleasure to bear testimony to the skill of Mr. Hunt in curing stammering in two cases: the first was in the instance of George Pearson, who gave the information on the recent attempt by Francis on her Majesty's life. Pearson was brought to my house to detail the circumstances, but his infirmity was of such a nature as to render him perfectly incapable of giving utterance to his meaning. Mr. Hunt kindly offered his services to Pearson; and in a fortnight I saw him again, when he spoke with the utmost readiness, and I believe the cure to be complete.

"The second instance is that of Mark Dessurne, a youth who was quite unable to speak,—in fact, he was hardly removed from dumbness. I have seen him this morning, and he converses and reads with the most perfect fluency and ease to himself. I consider this case more remarkable than that of Pearson's, his infirmity having rendered him so unwilling to attempt to speak, that his intonation is now imperfect, and resembles the tone of those children in the Deaf and Dumb Asylum.

"I am extremely unwilling to give anything like a testimonial, and this is almost the first instance in which I have

done so, but I consider it a duty to make this known as far as I can. The success of Mr. Hunt is only equalled by the extreme simplicity of the means he uses, founded on sound, and, as I believe, unerring principles."

The efforts that had been made to stop unnecessary mutilations, at last gave fruit that it had been attended with success; and hundreds bore testimony to the cures they had witnessed. Of laud from the lauded he had more than enough; and he looked on many of these voluntary effusions with, perhaps, too high a value. If I were to quote a quarter of the testimonials that were awarded to his efforts, both by scientific men and pupils, I should extend this book far beyond necessary limits. I shall, therefore, content myself with only giving a few from men whose testimony is a pledge to the whole world.

One of the earliest proofs of his provincial success, is vouched for, by Dr. Forbes, now Sir John Forbes.

"Mr. Hunt was kind enough to give a lesson in my presenee to Thomas Miles (a patient in the Chichester Infirmary), a poor man who has been affected with stammering, in a very high degree, from his infancy. And from the unreserved exposition of his principles on that occasion, as well as from the remarkable improvement (amounting almost to a complete cure) produced by this single lesson, I am of opinion that Mr. Hunt's method will be successful in nearly every case of stammering not depending on any organic defect, provided the requisite degree of attention is paid by the pupil."

"Chichester, April 12, 1828."

"JOHN FORBES, M.D."

Ever since the date of this letter, Sir J. Forbes, now practising in London, has continued to recommend pupils, with equally successful results.

To the adaptation of the system he originated, to all defects of articulation, ample testimony is borne in the following, from one of our most scientific and successful dentists, the worthy successor to the late Mr. Nasmyth, who held Mr. Hunt's system in high estimation. The ease with which the artificial palate is

supplied in cases where it is wanting, give such a degree of perfection, that it is surprising sufferers do not take advantage of such an ingenious appliance as mentioned in the subjoined.

“Sir,—I can have no hesitation in expressing a very decided opinion of the efficiency of your practice in the treatment of defective articulation. In cases of congenital cleft palates more especially, your course of elocutionary discipline has been of essential service in training the organs to the use of the very perfect instrument which we now have for this hitherto irremediable defect. I shall still continue to recommend all cases of this or other defect of the palate to your care, for the full development of the advantages of the apparatus. And I feel confident from some experience, that, where your instructions are diligently followed, a degree of perfection is attained, which leaves little to be desired.

“I am, Sir, very truly yours,
“EDWIN SAUNDERS.”

“13A, George Street, Hanover Square,
“June 23, 1847.”

To this I may add the testimony of one of the most celebrated surgeons of the present day; and one who, like the late Mr. Liston, speaks from the dictates of his conscience, and without fear of personal offence, if he can further the cause of humanity.

Extracts from Observations on Cleft Palate, by WILLIAM FERGUSON, Esq. F.R.S. Professor of Surgery to King's College, March, 1844.

Mr. D. P. ætat 17, has a congenital fissure in the palate; articulates very imperfectly. The sound of his voice is very unpleasant, and many of his words are unintelligible.

“Six months after the operation, Mr. P. had made no improvement in his speech, when he put himself under the tuition of Mr. Hunt, of Regent Street. In the course of a few weeks an extraordinary change was effected, and ere long, the articulation was so different, that little more could be desired.

“1848. At page 11, Mr. F. states, ‘Mr. D. P. ætat 17.

The details of this case are given in vol. xxvii. of the *Medico-Chirurgical Transactions*. Since that publication I have repeatedly seen this gentleman, in whom the benefit of the operation has been more strikingly evinced than in any other of my patients. This I attribute, in a great measure, to his zeal in the study of elocution.’”

The high minded testimony of all the leading authorities ought surely to be an example to their brethren in the profession, to endeavour to further the cause of truth and justice, and allow the public the benefit of a discovery which will not only bring comfort to the afflicted, but credit and thanks to the person who has been instrumental in procuring relief. Such erroneous ideas have always been circulated respecting stammering, that we often find, on speaking to a medical man, he simply says, “it is of no consequence;” or if he really cannot impress this on the mind of the poor sufferer, he assures him he will “grow out of it.” Such I need only say is a simple assertion, and not exemplified in a single case out of a hundred. It is too much a fault in the medical profession, that London practitioners act in a sort of clique, and each has his particular man for all specific diseases. This was the case with my father’s practice. Mr. So and So would not recommend him because he was supported by Mr. Liston; and Dr. ——— would not send pupils to him because Dr. Forbes and Sir James Eyre did. And thus it was,—and I may remark is at the present time,—in nearly all the different branches of the profession. Many professional men will not advise a patient to consult an eminent man in any branch, if the same person is recommended by his opponent! Such a state of things is both unjust and absurd. For myself I would never permit the charge to be made that I courted a particular branch of the profession. But I would put it forward to the whole world, and be content to abide by its merits. The fear that some entertain of the abuse of medical journals—conducted on the system of praise self and party and abuse opponents and their friends, prevent some from coming forward and pleading the cause of truth and justice. An examination into the component parts of some

of the organs of the medical profession as existing at the present time, will very soon elicit the fact that some are merely party organs; and although professing to represent the profession, are only the mouth-piece of a single person. I could mention an instance of a man who, after being abused by all the Medical journals, perhaps *not unjustly*, at once set up his own defence by the establishment of his own organ, where he could retaliate, and try and make persons ignorant of the subject, believe that he was the great authority, and all was truth that was contained in the articles and puffs on himself!

Without further digression I will here say that my father's practice had been well received by a Medical journal named after a familiar instrument used by the surgeon, *The Lancet*, and intended to act on its victim in the same manner. The principle of cutting and trying to wound is so easy that I need not describe it! Suffice it to say that, after my father's practice had been supported by this journal, and his letters inserted against surgical operations, *The Lancet* began to wish for the use of the cutting propensities it is known to possess; and on discovering that an acquaintance had lately paid attention to the subject of stammering, it at once commenced cutting away at my father and all the profession that had recommended him, forgetting it had done the same thing! The operation was a rather difficult one; but suddenly a discovery was made, that stammering was a *disease*, and belonged exclusively to the profession of medicine! After slashing away in what the "we" considered to be a very effective and grandiloquent style, it all at once was made aware that stammering is *not* a disease; and has the very unpleasant sensation of thinking that the public has watched it cutting away at a shadow!

The entire of this controversy is reprinted in the Appendix, and those who peruse it will see how severely that journal damaged the cause of him they tried to bring into public favour.

The following is the valued opinion of Mr. Robert Chambers,* and cannot fail to have its weight on an intelligent public, who has long known how to appreciate the good, sound, wholesome, intellectual food which he has offered them. So completely

* It appeared in *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal*, April 10, 1847.

does it represent the facts of the case that I have given it in *extensio*.

“I have been taken by a friend to see stammering cured by Mr. Hunt, in Regent Street. Though a matter in which a patrimonial interest is concerned, I feel tempted, by the interesting nature of what I saw, to make public allusion to Mr. Hunt’s system. Two young men were in attendance, both grievously afflicted with stammering, and both new cases. One was asked to sit down, and Mr. Hunt then addressed a few questions to him, on which he made the usual wretched attempts to answer. This young man had no recollection of ever speaking fluently. His attempts to read were equally miserable failures. Mr. Hunt then explained to him, in simple terms, the physiological and moral causes of stammering, and gave him a few very intelligible directions for the regulation of the mouth, tongue, respiration, and the part of the chest to speak from. The youth was soon able to pronounce sentences, and also to read, with considerable readiness. The other youth was then put through a similar series of lessons, and in an equally short time the comparatively perfect use of the organs was attained in his case. On a subsequent visit, I saw a girl who stammered and hesitated in an extraordinary manner, restored to a common style of speech in less than twenty minutes. These, however, are not cures. A complete victory over the bad habit can only be the work of time. There is no mystery whatever in the plan, It is merely replacing nature upon her pivot, from which accident or bad habit had thrown her. What the instructor does is but a small part of the cure. The greater part is the work of the pupil, fully obeying the rules, and persevering in them, till a new habit has been acquired. Most persons, I conceive, would not be safe from a relapse under carelessness for many months, and individuals of weak will, might fail altogether.

“Mr. Hunt is, strange to say, a Dorsetshire yeoman, who has been led by accidental circumstances to add this to his other avocations. He laments being under the necessity of keeping his plan, in the meantime, a secret—the only thing about it which struck me disagreeably; for who would not wish to see

the means of abolishing stammering diffused as widely as stammering itself? The exhibition is a most interesting one, creating that peculiar satisfactory feeling which we experience when the triumph of nature over error is asserted. Yet, as if to make good the rule that all benefits to humanity must come through the sufferings of individuals, Mr. Hunt has been subjected to persecution on account of his practice. It was discovered that stammering ought to be regarded as a disease, and therefore treated only by qualified medical men: on this ground Mr. Hunt was publicly denounced as a quack. It would be as reasonable to demand that a dancing-master, who substitutes graceful for awkward walking, or an elocutionist, who extirpates patois from the tones of the voice, should have a medical diploma. A beautiful thing it would be, indeed, for the resolver of this difficulty to go to a faculty altogether ignorant of the subject, and study their mysteries, which have nothing to do with it, and nine-tenths of which are now under a strong suspicion of being mere delusion, before he could be allowed to make use of an invention of his own, the benefits of which are palpable !”

The total failure of all the elocutionist's plans were quite visible both to the discerning public, and the unfortunate sufferers. The great difference in Mr. Hunt's plan of treatment to any other that had ever been adopted, was its greatest peculiarity; and the observer was astonished to find that such simple and obvious means had not been resorted to before. Mr. Hunt was therefore greatly indebted to the enlightened and intelligent press of this country for their humane efforts, in using all their influence in bringing this system before a discerning public. Such assurance as he received from the highest literary authorities, were some return of sympathy for the arduous duties he had to accomplish. Never did a man act with such charitable motives in the relief of distress when there really was any necessity for his generous impulses to be called in action.

The following is from the pen of a writer whose reputation and *locus standi* in the world of letters are of high position ;

and it is to Mr. John Forster, of the *Examiner*, the well known biographer of Goldsmith, that the public are indebted for the subjoined independant and truthful notice.*

“A prospectus is before us, issued by Mr. Hunt, on the subject of impediments of speech, and the possibility of their easy and certain removal, without any kind of surgical intervention, which we think of sufficient interest to bring under notice in this place. Struck by the announcement, and by a remark of the late Mr. Liston, among the testimonials quoted, we have sought and obtained an opportunity of witnessing the process adopted by Mr. Hunt. We have no hesitation in expressing a most favourable opinion of Mr. Hunt's process. Based upon clear and intelligible principles, it has the merit of singular simplicity. Mr. Hunt explains to his pupils the anatomical construction of the organs by which the voice is produced, points out the different causes of stammering, and teaches how an easy utterance may be obtained by removal of the cause that obstructs it in the particular case. There is nothing difficult to understand, or that the least intelligent may not readily seize and instantly act upon. When we can discover what has induced a habit contrary to nature, we are surprised to see how easily nature resumes what she might seem so completely to have lost. Whether or not she may be able to keep it depends on other considerations. In the case we had the pleasure to see tried, a young man,† whose unavailing attempts to read a line of verse had been quite frightful to witness, was enabled by something less than an hour's instruction, to read the whole of ‘Gray's Elegy’ with tolerable ease. Nor had we the least doubt that perseverance in the instructions given would eventually make the cure complete. But that this perseverance would be necessary, even to the point of incessant and uninterrupted practice for a very considerable time, we thought not less clear. Habit must be conquered by habit. With this proviso of hearty and laborious co-operation on the sufferer's own side, we believe that a very ingenious and intelligent gentleman has really dis-

* From the *Examiner* of March 2, 1850.

† Reference given to this pupil.

covered an efficacious cure for a most distressing defect, and we are happy to take this opportunity of saying so."

Amongst many others interested in the promulgation of truth and justice, was Mr. Charles Dickens, who took and expressed a deep interest in the practice, and was greatly pleased with the simplicity of the means adopted.

Hundreds of scientific men in every branch of learning, have felt anxious to witness the interesting process; and my father was always quite ready and happy to give an entire *exposé* of his practice and system, if he was convinced that it was simply for truth they were seeking, and not for the object of giving publicity to the means he adopted, or of attempting to use his system in an unjustifiable manner.

It is also a peculiarity of the system that a person witnessing one, two, or three cases, would be quite unable to convey, with any success, the information so gained to other sufferers. The forms of stammering are so various that it is rarely we meet with two cases that have exactly the same cause for their difficulty; and therefore it is that all persons who have attempted to cure by a little smattering of knowledge, are sure to fail in their application of the system to other cases, and thus bring disappointment to the sufferer, and a supposed disgrace to the system.

My quotations in other parts of this work show how severely Mr. Bishop, one of the assailants of my father, was handled, when he carried competition into detraction, and endeavoured to balance self-puffery with denunciations of imputed "unprofessional" quackery. Pursuing his professional practices, he, about 1850, returned more publicly to his web of sophistry, and printed a volume elaborately crammed with matters gathered from preceding writers on articulate sounds and philology, and cognate topics, but which have nothing to do with the "causes and cure of impediments of speech." A book, at any rate, looks more respectable than abuse in corrupt and venal periodicalism; and for a surgeon, regularly bred, affords a more fitting medium to denounce empirics, who dare to intermeddle with what he declares to be the sole domain of surgery, with its forceps and knife. The show of erudition and research here is

enormous; but is impossible to say what kind of opinion readers and intending pupils can be enabled to form from the riot of dorsums, velums, larynxes, pharynxes, labio-nasals, synchronous vibrations, septums, nariums, Eustachian tubes, uvulas, tonsils, glottisses, epiglottisses, arytenoid, genio-hyo-glossi, stylo-glossi muscles, hyoideses, escharotics, isochronous, crico thyroid, &c. &c. which runs through this learned collection of scraps on anatomy and physiology. I ought perhaps to apologise for playing the critic on such a performance; but it appears to me to be a mass of compilation calculated to confuse, whilst intended to dazzle; and that six pages of letter-press honestly addressed to the subject, *viz.*: the proximate causes of stammering, and a system of cure intelligible to the general reader, would be preferable, far more useful, and a safer guide, than fifty such productions. Mr. Bishop, however, stands upon his own grounds, and if they are tenable the inference must be that there are two distinct and opposite modes for the cure of impediments of speech, *i.e.* the singing, medicinal, and surgical, the teaching by jargonized phraseology, which not one pupil in a hundred can understand;—or the simply directive, practical, and natural, the employment of common language, which no pupil can misunderstand, or be at a loss to apply.

The number of pupils whom my father had relieved at last became very numerous, and many were anxious to express their gratitude to the benefactor who had rescued them from what must always have been a barrier to success in life. The *Literary Gazette*,* of February 24th, 1849, is selected from one of many notices that appeared at the time.

“The cure of stammering by Mr. Hunt has so often commanded our especial consideration, that we are gratified to find the success of his simple and efficacious system (almost without a failure, as we have witnessed for a number of years) is in the course of being marked by a public testimonial from a grateful band of the pupils he has taught to relieve themselves from these painful embarrassments, and enabled to take very different

* This journal supported Mr. Hunt's system from its earliest commencement; and notices may be found as early as 1828.

positions in life from those which such impediments imposed."

This gratifying tribute is an excellent likeness, and affectionately prized by his family and friends, and is a lasting memorial of his services to his fellow creatures. It is thus recorded in the *Catalogue of the Exhibition of the Royal Academy of Arts for 1849*.

"No. 1336. Marble Bust of Thomas Hunt, Esq. author of the system for the cure of stammering. Subscribed for, and presented to him, by his pupils, in testimony of his services during a period of twenty-two years.

"JOSEPH DURHAM."

Ardently pursuing his gratifying task to the last, Mr. Hunt, at the close of the London sojourn in 1851, left town in perfect health for his farm in Dorsetshire, the cultivation of which was pursued with almost equal zeal, affording active exercise to his mental, and restorative vigour to his physical powers. Here he occupied a considerable tract of land, and was not only sanguine in agricultural experiments and improvements on his own possessions, but took a prominent part in aiding the welfare of local interests, and promoting every scheme for the increase of their prosperity. His charities, parochial and vicinal public exertions, subscriptions to local improvements and beneficial undertakings, and general habit of hospitable and friendly neighbourhood, caused him to be held in high esteem by rich and poor,* and it is not too much to say that few men of his station in life, were ever more gratefully respected while living, or ever more sincerely lamented when dead. Benevolence and usefulness, combined with indefatigable energy, were his

* To the poor he was disinterestedly kind in promoting their welfare, and to the odious system of *truck*, carried on with success under the name of barter, he was a decided enemy, and spared no trouble in assisting to stop such a practice, as carried on by the stone-merchants of this place, Swanage, and neighbourhood. It is curious to remark the ignorance that exists in this place in the nineteenth century, the employers doing all in their power to perpetuate it.

characteristics; and in every relation it may truly be said of him, that he fulfilled the poet's description of an honest man, the noblest work of God!

Alas! his removal from the scene of his benevolence and usefulness, was premature and sudden. The autumnal harvest of the seed he had sown, some of it obtained when new theories were numerously supported, was not for him to reap; the exquisite fruit of many trees he had introduced to the soil, were not for his hands to gather. In the midst of health and happiness and joyous expectations, the strong man was struck down; as is recorded in the subjoined obituary:—

“Obituary of Eminent Persons deceased,” in the *Illustrated London News*, August 23, 1851.

“THOMAS HUNT.—After one week of severe illness, died at Godlingstone, near Swanage, on Monday last, the 18th inst. Thomas Hunt, Esq. so long and so justly held in high esteem for his skill in the cure of stammering. During some twenty-five years of Mr. Hunt's practice, a great number have been benefitted by his care, and very many have to be grateful to

In the autumn of 1854, the idea was conceived of starting a Mechanics' Institution in this place, at which no less than six gentlemen then under my care addressed the meeting, some with great fluency and eloquence. The merchants and inhabitants will not, however, afford it any support; and it is now chiefly assisted by visitors. Should any of my readers be inclined to be charitable, I venture to say that there can be no institution where the good will be so visible, useful, and appreciated as at this place. It can scarcely be believed that in England there should exist in the nineteenth century such complete slavery as there is at the present time in this and the adjacent places. Some of the workmen and quarriers have never seen a shilling, and many never received one in wages or for stone. The greater part of the wages are paid in *bread*, and this is again exchanged for clothes, &c. Coals are also supplied to the men, and are again taken by the medical men in payment of their bills. The most exorbitant profits are charged by the merchants on these poor wretches, who are too ignorant to know their own position. It is hoped, with the support of the benevolent, that this state of things will be removed by the spread of intelligence and education. They have, on one or two occasions, tried to shake off the burden thus thrust on them, but have been obliged to succumb to the cant of the stone truck merchants, who plead they shall be ruined if the men demand their money; as the only profit they say they get is on the goods supplied to the men.

him for rescuing them, not only from the mortification and distress of a painful disorder (for such it is), but for rendering them eligible to undertake higher stations in trade, the army and navy, all the liberal professions, and even in the legislature. His system was simply to teach the sufferers, by the plainest common-sense directions, the means of restoring nature to its functions, which were perverted and counteracted by evil habits, or the curious infection of involuntary imitation. Mr. Hunt held, and truly held, that not one case in fifty was the consequence of deficient or mal-organization; and he sternly and perseveringly eschewed the knife. In many cases the effect of a single lesson was so remarkable as to appear like magic, converting the convulsive stutterer from distressing unintelligibility into freedom of voice, distinctness of utterance, and correctness of pronunciation. The pupils and the witnesses of such an hour's or two hours' change were alike astonished by the obvious process, which only required a degree of moderate attention to confirm for ever.

“Mr. Hunt was of a good Dorsetshire family, many of whom were connected with the Church. He was educated at Cambridge, but circumstances led to his choice of farming instead of taking degrees. His devotedness to his one great pursuit did not prevent him from cultivating, as a distinguished agriculturist, a large farm in Dorsetshire, where he was as much respected in that sphere as he was generally esteemed for his peculiar talent in what may be termed professional life. A widow and family of eight children are left to lament his loss.”

Mr. Hunt's death appeared to be the signal for the revival of competition in the walk he had occupied so much to the exclusion of the advocates for surgical operations, and pretenders of inferior station. The notorious and the obscure rushed forward again, and books and pamphlets with no names attached to them, and advertisements sanctioned by the anonymous authorities of A.B.C. or X.Y.Z.* appealed to the public, with every assertion and assurance of infallibility.

* This advertiser now announces his name to be Mr. Barthroppe, and

The public was speedily besieged by a corps of resolute curers of stammering, everyone alike asserting the infallibility of his nostrum, though differing as the poles asunder; and it must be owned that if there are so many ways of remedying this defect, it would be perfectly inexcusable in any rational being to suffer the pains and penalties accruing from impediments of speech. But if there be wisdom in a multiplicity of judges, there is distraction in a multiplicity of counsellors, each advocating pretensions of which it is equally difficult to discover the practical grounds, or the probable consequences. Several mere teachers of languages and elocution fancied themselves, at once, able to cope with the manifold, and sometimes intricate causes, mental and physical, which combine to produce imperfections of utterance. But others really not so well qualified as these by education or habit of tuition,* were still more confident and presuming. A worthy painter and glazier, who modestly preserved the anonyme, advertised stoutly the capability of the last letter of the Greek alphabet (*omega*); to teach everybody, however afflicted, to speak English plainly and naturally.

The following extract from a periodical† so fully illustrates the true state of things, that I quote it in illustration.

“In addition to the main incidents of the volume there are many lively sketches and humorous anecdotes of divers quacks, pretenders, and mock elocutionists who ply an unholy trade in the miseries and woes of over credulous people, by the unblushing pretensions which they daily put forth of their ability to cure every sort of human malady. The curious, who make a practice

asserts that he cured himself! This is a very doubtful qualification for a person, because what would cure one, would not others; and many persons who have got rid of their stammering, are quite unconscious how the cure was effected.

* A dancing master has recently come before the public, and asserted his ability to exercise the voice and cure stammering in the same way as he removes inelegancies of carriage!

† The *Literarium*; or, *Educational Gazette*, of March 19th, 1856. In a review of a book entitled the *Unspeakable*; or, *Life and Adventures of a Stammerer*, published at 1s. by C. H. Clarke, 23A, Paternoster Row.

of looking over the advertisement pages of the newspapers, will recognise the accuracy of the picture drawn of those worthies, who are a living blot upon our civilization."

Amongst other advertisements that appeared soon after the death of my father, was one at his old residence, in Regent Street. This person announced "Mr. Hunt's system;" "reduction of charge;" and the whole family of Mr. Hunt were entirely ignorant at first who this impostor was. A medical friend of my father's was requested to call and discover the party: and on going to the door and asking for "Mr. Hunt," he was requested to "walk up," when a person—no other than the party who let the apartments to my father, and kept the lacc-shop below—introduced himself, and presented one of my father's prospectuses. On being asked "if his name was Mr. Hunt," he replied in a hesitating manner that "it was not," but confusedly attempted a statement that it was "all right, and "just the same thing." The gentleman soon after took his leave, disgusted at the baseness of human nature, that could thus seize the opportunity of the shock to Mr. Hunt's family, and their naturally retiring from the apartments where they had witnessed only the success of their beloved parent, to the seclusion of their home in Dorsetshire; thus to make use of his name and reputation to the injury of the public, and the pain and disgust of his family and friends.

This pretender then printed some of my father's testimonials, in such a manner as to induce the belief that they were his property, and actually had the impudence to announce himself as "successor to the late Mr. Hunt!"

I select the following letters from among a host of others I have received, which will show the facts of the case; and also my reasons for exposing these delusive assertions.

"Sir,—Some years since I had the pleasure of consulting with your father on a case of stammering, and it has been with some degree of regret that I have seen the hackneyed use of his name by another person at his old residence in Regent Street, to create a fame for himself by connecting his pretensions with the late Mr. Hunt's respectability, in so systematic a manner

that while it may attract the eye of the injudicious and unwary reader of the *Times*, it must also create the feeling of revulsion towards a son, who quietly allows the assumption of his father's name, instead of maintaining his own right to it, while professedly following the same profession (and one of the highest order, as it confers a blessing on mankind), which this plebian, like the low shop-keeper, by reducing the 'price' of *his* article, thinks to catch the eye; and may do so for the time being, but the more judicious will regard it with contempt, resting on their own judgment, that the affliction of years—for the removal of which no extent of money can ever be an equivalent—and that it can be overcome by a temporary treatment of twelve attendances, by one who, since the demise of your father, has arrogated to himself his knowledge. * * * *

"Now, in respect to your father's memory, arouse from this too apparent apathy, that has aroused even the energy of a friend's pen, and remove the odium that is now cast on his name, and also prove to the world the injustice that is heaped on it by this ignorant usurper. An act of friendship united to respect needs no apology; and I beg to subscribe myself,

"Brighton,

"Yours, &c.

"V."

"Sir,—If you were to continue your advertisement, such as appeared a week ago in the *Times*, you might swamp that *vile impostor*, who is so constantly inserting 'Mr. Hunt's system perfected.' What is this but telling the public your father knew nothing about his vocation? and your claim seems no higher! But he cures stammering in twelve lessons! I would soon take the point from his lace if I were the son of the late Mr. Hunt. I am, &c.

"London.

"* * * *"

The following is an answer to a gentleman explaining the circumstances.

"Dear sir,—* * * I can serve you, and will do so, if I find you persevere in destroying the imposition now being practised at 224, Regent Street. Just look at the words of the advertisement, where he says, "as conducted for the last twelve years;" of course this supposes your late much respected and lamented father, who has not been dead two years. Everyone goes there

expecting to see him; but on arriving there the laceman represents himself to have been his assistant, solicits persons to take lessons of him, as he can cure them in twelve lessons. They swallow the bait, and he pockets the money, &c. &c. I am, &c. “ * * * ”

“Sir,—If you look at the *Times* of to-day you will see Urling’s lace warehouse is turned into a place for the ‘cure of stammering,’ as established since 1840, on a ‘new system.’ This man is determined by *lies* to usurp your profits, if he cannot by ‘Mr. Hunt’s system perfected.’ What a piece of humbug! I think, by a little exercise of your brains, you might easily put an extinguisher on his nonsense. I am, &c.

“London, November 19th, 1853. “ * * * ”

I have thus been called on by hundreds of old pupils to protect the name of a parent they esteem; and I do so with great reluctance. My wish to treat this person with all the contempt he deserves, has often caused me to pass by his assertions and false statements; but the truth is forced from me, and unfortunately the worse remains untold.

How many this person has deceived I will not venture to say, but I fear they have been very many. I am continually receiving letters, and having persons under my charge who had been led away by his assertions. This man’s name is G. F. Urling, Sen. who was at this time a laceman* and coal-merchant. Not only did he thus try to deceive the public, but he *opened letters* addressed to my father, and *answered* them. A registered letter was addressed to my father by a solicitor, and this also the impostor opened and answered! A man that will do this much, I need not say would be guilty of worse acts,—if such a thing were possible. I have in my possession a number of this man’s replies to persons who had sent letters to my father at 224, Regent Street, unaware of his decease; and I am fully prepared to substantiate all I have said, as well as the charges that are too truly brought against

* He has now no connexion with the lace business; that is very respectably carried on by his son, whom I believe to be entirely ignorant of the hypocritical practices of his unfortunate parent.

him, in the letters I have above printed. I feel I should neither be discharging my duty to my father's memory, or to the public generally, were I to allow this pretender to make his false assertions with impunity, though I would fain the task had devolved on some one fonder than myself of such exposure. In the first edition of this work I simply entered my protest against the total absurdity of this man's professions. I there asserted that, to the best of my knowledge, and from information of those most intimate with my father, that this Mr. Urling never had other connexion with him, than as a landlord, receiving his rent, and perhaps being occasionally admitted to witness his method of instruction, and to observe the success which attended it. Hundreds of other persons have done the same thing, but none, I imagine, would have the boldness to abuse his confidence, and far less to assert that they had even a chance of curing such a disorder: they *must* fail from their very partial knowledge of the subject. Abstractly speaking, and without personal reference, I may notice the gross absurdity of uneducated men, whose whole lives have been absorbed in business pursuits, setting up claims to any professional exercise, of the very nature of which they must be profoundly ignorant. Skill in the curative treatment of disorders of the human frame, is not caught, like the disorders themselves, by incidental contact or brief observation. It can only be the result of accurate study, long training, and actual experience, such as neither glazier nor laceman can be imagined to possess. Although I could bear witness to the many utter failures and disappointments that have been the result of Mr. Urling's pretensions, I will not enlarge upon them: one case speaks for the mass. A parent informs me that "he failed because he had only a superficial knowledge of the system," and *ex uno disce omnes*.

Having thus, in justice to the public and to myself, given the foregoing statement of this man's fraudulent proceedings and usurpation of my father's system and reputation, I would say a word, in conclusion, of my late parent's services to his country, in relation to the hitherto irremediable defect. From the moment of his discovery he determined that nothing should prevent him from devoting to the public the benefit of his

services. His trials in conducting the rise and progress of his system, can only be estimated by those who have been placed in the same position. In the midst of all his successes, when he had dispelled the petty jealousies, and exposed the nefarious practices of pretenders, he was suddenly taken to his long home, and only his fair name left for his family to cherish.

The estimation in which he had been held by hundreds, caused an immense influx of most gratifying letters of condolence to the family, many of which are from some of the highest authorities in the land.

The upraising of the very lowly to respectable positions is always an intense gratification, and the reader may conceive something of the exultation if a fine young gardener of good connexions, condemned to be a common labourer by painful stammering, able within a few weeks to undertake the responsible situation of foreman in a great nursery, and glibly name every plant in the house and grounds ; or an innkeeper's son doomed to drudgeries of the cellar by the same cause, lifted at once into an employment of comparative importance, and made a useful member of the concern instead of a banished slave.

Many very curious and interesting circumstances have at different times occurred, and amongst others was a very whimsical one, with the father of a young family, who was so miserably afflicted as to be all but unintelligible in his speech. On his return home, completely restored to perfectly distinct utterance, several of his children were so astonished at the change that they failed for a while to recognize him, or obey the parental orders given in so different a voice and manner!

Few would have combated, as my father did, the accumulated obstacles that beset him during his arduous career ; and his zeal and perseverance will be acknowledged by those who read the attacks made upon him, which are reprinted in the Appendix.

For myself I am proud to acknowledge, that I owe much of my present position, and authority on this subject, to the fact that I am the sole exponent of the results of his great experience. The satisfaction he derived from his success in relieving the afflicted, was ever his support under trials, and if

I may be inclined at times to murmur at the arduous task I have to perform, I have the consolation to think that his work was far more tedious; and I have also the same gratification in feeling that I am the happy means of affording comfort to my fellow creatures. However uncharitable some persons have been, I believe that my father's life bears testimony to the devotedness with which he laboured for the relief of his afflicted brethren, and with a singleness of purpose not often met with. For so much, at least, he is entitled to the gratitude of a very numerous class; and I am proud to be, through this brief Memoir, their humble instrument in thus recording his true character.

APPENDIX

TO PART I. OR TREATISE ON STAMMERING.

CASES.

I have before asserted that there are two great classes of stammerers, the sensitive and the careless—although it is impossible to say in some cases which a person may be, as the one is often mixed up with the other. Many persons who were originally of a careless temperament, have really been made more or less sensitive by their continual failure, and by the injurious effect that their stammering has had on their success in life. Generally a person becomes sensitive on his entering the world for himself, but some go their whole lives without feeling their stammering more than a slight annoyance.

CARELESS.

Mr. C. W. ætat 23, consulted me with a bad stammer, in which all his facial muscles were under great contortions ; but it did not seem to cause him any uneasiness, and he would persist in keeping on speaking when there was no necessity. He informed me that his acquaintances did not notice his defect, and he simply wanted to get rid of it to go into the militia, and could not do so unless he got rid of his impediment. When speaking to me at our first interview, he said he could not stammer, and could not do it if he tried ; in fact, he thought no one scarcely knew he did stammer ; being entirely unconscious that when he was saying this he was stuttering, and making contortions of the face the whole time ! This

gentleman remained with me five weeks, and was entirely and permanently cured of what he considered to be only a little annoyance.

Mr. ——— ætat 19, stammered much worse than the above case, but cared nothing for it, and was anxious to get rid of it because it was remarked in society, and some people laughed at him. This he did not care for; but his friends were anxious that he should be cured, and he would therefore wish to oblige them, by placing himself under my instruction. He was very easily cured; but his natural impetuosity and carelessness, with a determination to use no care when he found he could speak easily, he, after a time, relapsed into his former state. He, however, had the power to speak quite fluently when he liked, and was always ready to venture any sum of money that he would not stammer under any circumstances for a given time. And having done this much for him, he did not (from some cause) think it worth while to try to speak properly, as it scarcely caused him any uneasiness, it being more pain to his friends than to himself, and for this reason persons should remember that if they do not feel it themselves, they should know that they are a nuisance to their acquaintances.

Mr. S. ætat 30, put himself under my tuition for a stammer, especially at the letters *k* and *g*, and used great energy with some of the lower facial muscles, which had given a very unpleasant expression to his countenance. He soon got rid of this manner of speaking and its result, and immediately said it was all he cared about, and did not take any more trouble to conquer the remaining defect, which could easily be noticed by the listener, but caused him no unpleasantness, and said it was not worth thinking about, or taking a little time and trouble to conquer.

Mr. B. ætat 21, consulted me for a severe impediment which troubled him when saying the letters *l* and *t*, and could not say any words beginning with them on any occasion without great difficulty. He conquered this defect, and when I last heard

of him, he said he had nearly forgotten that he ever had stammered.

Mr. S. ætat 48, had stammered all his life, but had caused him no mental pain, and stuttered alike on all occasions.

Master H. ætat 15 ; Master C. H. ætat 12 ; Master H. G. D. ætat 16 ; Master J. W. ætat 17 ; Miss U. ætat 14 ; Miss H. ætat 7, are all cases where I found the nervous system scarcely to be the least affected, and they always stammered about the same, and some of them only at particular letters or words: this state is generally found in very young children, especially before twelve years of age ; but many cases are of a sensitive nature from a very early age.

The following two cases are of a medium nature, both sensitive and careless.

Mr. C. F. ætat 26, stammered from childhood, and up to the age of 21 he cared nothing for his impediment ; about this time, however, he was in consequence of it, prevented from going to the bar. From this and some other disappointments, he at last began to be aware of his misfortune, and of the barrier that his defect was likely to be to his progress through life. On consulting me he informed me of the series of disappointments his defect had caused him, and expressed himself ready to go through any ordeal that would free himself from his impediment, which he found considerably increased on speaking to his superiors. To strangers he would scarcely stammer at all or to his friends at home, yet when he went to any important engagement he would stammer badly. He was very attentive for the first few days, and made great progress, and then he gave up the practice ordered him, and relapsed into his old habit, and lost confidence in his own powers. He then had all his work to do over again, when his previous failure was of essential service to him, and he was more careful and persevering, and was well repaid ; after two months (three weeks of which time was completely lost) he was

entirely cured, and remains so up to the present time. He now finds that he can speak to his superiors as fluently as he can to others if he is a little careful; but he tells me he scarcely ever thinks of his stammering or his antidote for it.

I find I have in my note book a number of cases very similar to the above, of persons who profess to feel more than any person would ever imagine from the little time or trouble they seem disposed to give for the removal of their infirmity. They often know the disadvantage and unpleasantness of the impediment, but have not sufficient perseverance and mental control to enable them to constantly practise the prescribed directions, and then always lose time, although they generally possess enough good sense to use the attention and care necessary.

THE SENSITIVE OR MENTAL STAMMERERS.

Mr. T. ætat 21, was studying at the Oxford University, and had a desire to enter the church, but was at times so affected with an occasional stammer, as to be quite unable to pronounce. If speaking the impediment was scarcely noticed by his friends, and many of his associates were ignorant of his defect. In reading, however, he had the greatest difficulty; and many words he could not say without great contortions of the countenance. He could read alone and to his intimate friends with ease, and could, on all occasions, recite poetry with pleasure and effect. This gentleman stammered so much at some letters, that when he attempted to say them, there was an involuntary action of the under jaw. In conversation these words would nearly always be omitted, and synonymous words used instead; but this could not be done in reading. If he were obliged to say the word in conversation, his difficulty would be as great as in reading. This practice of using synonymes is carried on very successfully for a considerable time by persons who have a good command of language; and nearly all mental stammerers resort to it, often unconsciously.

The gentleman remained with me a few weeks, and returned to his friends able to read and speak on all occasions. He was anxious to get cured before he went up for *vivâ voce* examination,

and did not suffer the least from his impediment; and has since obtained his degree with honours. Two years have elapsed since he was under my tuition, and he remains free from his impediment at the present moment, and has kindly offered to substantiate the same to any gentleman I like to refer to him.

Mr. R. ætat 24, had stammered for many years, and recently had met with many disappointments, brought on by his stammering. Just before he consulted me he was compelled to give up a good appointment in a public company, because he was unable to speak or read before the directors. All this had the effect of producing great bodily derangement, and, being at last thrown on the support of his friends, he gave way to melancholy. He remained in this state some months, during which time he suffered severely from dyspepsia and constipation, which baffled the skill of his medical attendants. He tried change of air, hydropathy, and homœopathy, but without benefit. His impediment, formerly slight, and only occurring when speaking before strangers, now assumed a very severe character whatever person he addressed. When alone, he could read and speak quite well, or to a very intimate friend; and in the earlier stage of his stammering he could speak to any person who was not conscious of his impediment; but if he had once stammered to a person, he could never speak plainly to him again. He became at last quite hypochondriack, and was troubled with all sorts of delusions. He could not be induced to move in society, and he often went for days without speaking to any person if he could avoid it. His friends became alarmed at his state, and at his repeated confessions that life had no pleasures for him; and his earnest prayer was that he might be taken from it. They consulted several of the first medical men, some of whom told them he was to go abroad; others that he must undergo a course of medicine, or be operated on; but some, with more research and discretion, "that he ought to get rid of his stammering," which they saw (after a few questions) was the primary cause of his melancholy state. By the recommendation of several eminent medical men, he was brought to me. His confessions to me are too melancholy to relate; and it required

a great amount of reasoning before I could withdraw from his mind the delusions that had taken possession of it respecting his utterance, the result chiefly of books he had consulted on the subject. The confusion and disappointment there produced he confessed was the means of considerably increasing his infirmity. He remained constantly under my care for several weeks; and with strict attention to my instructions, he gradually acquired greater self-control, and his mind became hopeful. His health continued to be much impaired, when he accompanied me, in the end of the month of August, to Swanage, Dorset, where, being on the coast, he was enabled to obtain the advantages of sea-bathing, besides change of air and scene. He continued to fail before strangers occasionally for some time: but at last acquired so perfect a command over his vocal organs as to care for no one, and mixed in society with pleasure. Since that time he has repeatedly addressed a public assembly. His health, expression of countenance, and speech were all equally improved; and he continues to be a changed individual, in whom no one would recognise the sufferer I have described above.

Mr. C. ætet 21, did not stammer the least in conversation on general subjects, but if he were obliged to say some particular words, his difficulty was so great that he would often give up the attempt. A casual observer would not know that he had an impediment; and his friends and companions were mostly ignorant of the fact. If he had to call on a person with a difficult name, his impediment would prevent him from making the least sound when the servant appeared at the door. On one occasion he called on a friend, and the servant informed his master "there was a dumb gentleman at the door;" but on seeing his friend he could speak with ease. He could sometimes speak for days without difficulty, and could say even his difficult words when not thinking of them. On conveying to another person a fixed message, his impediment would be insurmountable. He considered himself to be very nervous, and to a certain extent this was the case; but it was greatly the effect of his stammering. I do not think I have ever witnessed any case of so much difficulty as he experienced with the organs

of articulation in endeavouring to pronounce the words at which he hesitated, they being purely confined to those beginning with *l*, *t*, *d*, and *p*, when followed with a short vowel. If he could have excluded about fifty words from the language, he would then never have stammered. It was a work of time and patience to give him the right use of the articulate organs; but when he had once conquered his difficulty, and acquired the proper use of the organs employed, he spoke with ease and facility; and the words he found so great a difficulty in pronouncing, he can now say as easily as others. He can speak before large numbers, and has done so with ease. His stammering and difficulty is as entirely eradicated as if it never existed, although he continues to be of rather a melancholic and nervous temperament.

TESTIMONIALS.

The following testimonials are inserted—as samples of the host of similar ones—with which I have been favoured from pupils and their friends in every profession. Were I to print all the testimonials which I have received during the past four years, I should require a volume double the size of the present. I have preferred giving some “cases,” from which I have no doubt those afflicted will be able to discover the particular form of their own case, and thus prevent more detail than is necessary. For those who disbelieve in the cure under judicious treatment, the following will be more than ample proof of the fallacy of their conviction.

“Wansted, Essex, May 2, 1856.

“My dear sir,—I am happy to say my son is at present as free from his defect as he was when he left you last Christmas. Your mode of treatment for the cure of this distressing disorder, I consider *perfect*.

“I was not only sceptical, but quite hopeless of his cure; and I sent him to you more from a wish to feel that I had left nothing undone, than from any hope of success.

“My son’s case was very bad indeed. He always had a slight inclination to stammer, but was not bad until six years of age; and was every year getting worse until he went to you, between fifteen and sixteen years of age. You are quite at liberty to refer to me, or use my name in any way you wish. I should have offered this before, but did not think the name of so obscure an individual could be of any use to you, who will, ere long, have a world-wide reputation.

“I am truly yours obliged,

“GEORGE A. HAMILTON, M.A.

“*Chaplain of the Infant Orphan Asylum, Wanstead.*”

“James Hunt, Esq. &c. &c.”

Extract of a letter from Mrs. SIMMONS, 46, New King Street, Bath, to Mr. James Hunt, dated September 4, 1853.

“When I saw my son, I was the most astonished at the great ease and fluency he had acquired, and that, too, in so short a time, as from the age of four or five years, he had stammered to a most painful degree. Your mode of treatment has had a most wonderful effect in removing this great hindrance to his future success in life. I shall always feel a great pleasure in answering any inquiries respecting your skill, or kindness of treatment, and pray make whatever use of my name you think proper.”

“Haselbury Vicarage, near Crewkerne, Somerset.

“October 22, 1855.

“My dear sir,—I have much pleasure in bearing testimony to the efficacy of your method of curing stammering; and you are at liberty to publish the fact that my eldest son, above 16 years

of age, was enabled to master the rules given him in the short period of one month, and was able to read and speak freely.

"You will probably recollect that I told you it was 'stretching a point' for me to meet the necessary expenses: yet I am so far from regretting the outlay that I consider a larger sum would have been well spent; and the best outlay which could have been made for the future welfare of my son. And as many, like myself, may hesitate in incurring the expense for their children under similar circumstances, I consider that, in recommending them to avail themselves of your valuable training, I advise them to consult the best temporal interests of their children. And none, I feel convinced, will afterwards regret that they have followed this advice.

"Believe me to be, yours faithfully and obliged,

"FREDERICK DUSAUTOY, A.M."

"James Hunt, Esq. &c. &c. New Burlington Street."

"23, Fenchurch Street, May 3, 1856.

"Dear Sir,—It gives me great pleasure to bear testimony to your success in relieving my son from the very painful impediment in his speech, which had been a growing trouble to him up to the time of his first introduction to you in the autumn of last year. He then spoke with much difficulty; and some words he could scarcely say at all.

"I may confidently say the cure has been perfect on your part. I feel very thankful that I was induced by two eminent medical gentlemen to consult you, and place the case in your hands; and that the result has been so beneficial to my son, and satisfactory to us all.

"Believe me, dear sir,

"Yours very faithfully,

"James Hunt, Esq."

"CHARLES MOSS."

"Thorngrove, near Worcester,

"May 26, 1856.

"Sir,—It gives me great pleasure to bear witness to the great change you have effected in my daughter's articulation.

"She now converses freely, with great satisfaction to herself and those around her.

"I am, sir, yours very sincerely,

"James Hunt, Esq.

"SAM. BAKER."

The following letter, in answer to some inquiries, is kindly allowed publicity by the writer.

"104, Edgware Road, Paddington.

"April 25, 1856.

"Dear Sir,—My nephew was under Mr. Hunt's care more than three years since; and although only with him a few weeks, he returned home speaking as fluently as any boy of his age. He was then about ten years old, and had stuttered to a painful degree from his infancy, which produced great contortions of the face, and an entire motion of the muscles of the whole body.

"I am happy to say he continues to speak and read as well as on the day he left.

"If your son stammers badly, I believe Mr. Hunt will consider it necessary that he should reside with him, when the cure is effected in a shorter time, and rendered more certain and permanent. I believe Mr. Hunt considers the earlier (after the pupil is able to read) the case is placed under his care, the more easy and certain is the result. You may rely on every domestic attention being given both by Mr. and Mrs. Hunt.

"I always feel a pleasure in answering any inquiries on the subject; and I am convinced you will be grateful to all who have induced you to procure his assistance and successful practice, which is worthy of the admiration of all, and not to be confounded with the 'quack statements' so often forced on the notice of the public.

"I remain, dear sir, yours very truly,

"To H. F."

"D. SYDENHAM."

"15, Finsbury Circus, May 17, 1856.

"I have much pleasure in bearing my testimony to the success

which has attended the treatment of stammering, as practised by Mr. James Hunt. I have had occasion to send (both to himself and his late father) some very bad cases, which have been perfectly cured by his mode of practice, which I am certain is calculated to do a great deal of good.

“R. DAWSON, M.D.

“*Member of the Royal College of Physicians, London.*”

“2, Finsbury Place South, Finsbury Square,

“London, May 21, 1856.

“My dear sir,—I shall esteem it an honour if any attestation of mine should be of the least value to the excellent and successful mode adopted by you for the cure of stammering and general defective speech.

“In the case of my patient, who, when he first consulted me, could scarcely articulate at all; and even when not excited, often gave up the effort to express himself in vain, in consequence of the distortions of the body he was compelled to make. I had the pleasure of seeing him shortly after he had been under your treatment, with every word under complete control, and a most pleasing facility of expression. The gratitude that has been expressed to me by him, as well as by others of your pupils for the success of the plan adopted by you for their cure, and their appreciation of the rules given them for the future preservation of their speech, is a better testimonial than any that can be written by me. In conclusion, I truly think it is a matter for regret that such benefits are not more largely appreciated, and widely disseminated.

“I remain, my dear sir, yours very truly,

“HENRY STEVENS, M.R.C.S. ETC.

“*Surgeon to the Islington Dispensary and City Orthopædic Hospital.*”

“To James Hunt, Esq. &c. &c.”

The following is from the pen of a gentleman so well known and appreciated by the public generally, that I need only mention that it is from the pen of the author of *Yeast*, *Alton Locke*, *Hyppatia*, *Westward Ho!* *Glaucus*, &c. &c. and I am convinced it must carry with it that weight which it deserves. Such a testi-

mony is in itself surely sufficient to remove all scepticism; and sufferers who disbelieve in the cure, will owe much to such an authority for removing their doubts and misgivings on the subject.

“Enersley Rectory, March, 1856.

“My dear sir,—I have waited till I had something worth saying before I wrote to you. At first I had various small relapses and failures, which put me out of heart: but I must tell you now that all my friends are quite surprised and delighted with the change in my speech. I have gone through many trying evenings without stammering a word; and even when, being at home tired and excited, I broke down a little, and have always been able to recover myself before any spasm came on. All I need now, is steady attention and practice to your three simple rules, for which I thank you with all my heart.

“My relative has given up all his prospects, and gone to Australia, simply on account of his stammering. This had happened while I was in town with you. Had I known you three months before, he might have been saved; and I dare say his story is that of many. I assure you already what you have done for me has been much talked of; and that many have promised me to get you pupils.

“I must not forget to say that (thanks to you), I have been preaching and lecturing extempore, not only without stammering, but with an ease I never felt before.

“Believe me, yours most truly grateful,

“C. KINGSLEY.”

“James Hunt, Esq. &c.

“8, New Burlington Street.”

APPENDIX

TO THE SECOND PART, OR MEMOIR.

(See pp. 66 and 70.)

From the Lancet of May 16, 1846 pp. 557, 558.

“Recently we inserted in the *Lancet* a paper on ‘The Cause of Stammering and the Means of Cure,’ by Mr. Butterfield, a Cambridge Master of Arts. We then took occasion to observe ‘that the treatment and cure of stammering belong to the profession of medicine.’ Of this we suppose there can be no doubt: we imagine that it will be conceded at once to be a disease, and, as such, falling within the province of the healing art. Yet, if we look around, it is evident enough that the treatment of this malady is, in a very great measure, in unprofessional hands, and carried on too, as we shall shew, in a most offensive manner. We inserted Mr. Butterfield’s communication under protest, and, as might, perhaps, have been expected, we see he has since appeared in public with a new mode of treatment. His advertisements notify that ‘Butterfield’s Alphabetic Speculum, made by Weiss and Son, for the prevention and cure of stammering, may be had, with directions for use, price £1 ls. on application to the inventor.’ Now, we maintain the principle of all this to be wrong and indefensible. If Mr. Butterfield wishes to treat disease, whether one malady or the entire range, let him educate himself as a medical man, and render himself professional; but it is not common honesty to come in like the wolf over a wall, and take guineas from men who have invested a large amount of time and capital in acquiring diplomas. Stammering, it may be true, is a disease in which no great mischief will, perhaps, be inflicted by non-professional treatment; but, nevertheless, it vitiates the public mind to accustom people to see any malady treated unprofessionally. To witness one disorder given up tacitly by the profession in this way, affords the public a kind of warrant for seeking empirical aid in other ailments where grievous mischief may be done. On the grounds, therefore, that it is unjust towards the profession, that it is in itself unprincipled, and that it is sure to prove indirectly injurious to the public health, we feel called upon to warn the profession against sanctioning the attempts of Mr. Butterfield, or any other person not professionally educated, to obtain practice in the treatment of stammering, or of any other malady whatsoever.

“And we are the more bound to do this, because we see that medical men are actively engaged in obtaining practice for another unprofessional person, who professes to treat stammering. The word ‘treat,’ we may observe, is a misnomer in such cases. An educated man talks and writes of ‘treating’ disease; but to vaunt himself as ‘curing’ would be held to be in bad taste, and meet with no gentle rebuff from his brethren. But the professionally uneducated have no such qualms of fastidiousness; they seldom have anything to do with disease of any kind, except in the way of downright unmincing ‘cure.’ Nothing but perfect cure and unparalled success is ever heard of in the practice of the empirick. Charles Lamb in the country churchyard, seeing the virtues set forth upon every tombstone, wondered ‘where all the bad people could have been buried.’ So we wonder where all the bad cases of the quacks can get to. Certes, there must be such things. The person we allude to, as so improperly patronised by certain professional men, is a Mr. Hunt. He was formerly, we have been informed, a Dorsetshire farmer, who now makes an irruption upon London every season, coming in about the time of Grisi or Cerito, and disappearing about the same time with them, after a tolerably abundant harvest; for his practice is said to be flourishing, and his fees to be large. Mr. Hunt, like Mr. Butterfield, is from Cambridge, though we never heard of his degree; not being ourselves of Trinity, we have no great respect for the man who has entered the College walls, and left them with no other title than ‘late of Trinity.’ It may mean anything or nothing.

“We proceed to give some of this person’s testimonials. Those from individual members of the profession are bad enough; but what will our readers think of the following from a medical journalist, who ought to be one of the conservators of the profession:—

“‘We recently saw a youth who had been operated upon without the slightest benefit, but who was subsequently cured of his stammering, in the course of two or three days, by Mr. Hunt, whom we have heard favourably spoken of on several occasions, and who,

we are glad to observe, is patronised by several distinguished members of the profession.
—*Medico-Chirurgical Review.*

“The following certificates from members of the profession are equally bad in tone and purport; the wonder is, how any medical men could be so lost to professional decency as to write them;—

“‘CURE OF STAMMERING.—No. XI.

“‘Infirmary, Bristol, Feb. 5, 1840.

“‘I have attentively followed Mr. Hunt’s course of instruction to persons afflicted with hesitation of speech or stammering. His method is founded upon a profound study of the structure and functions of the organs of voice, and particularly of those of the tongue.

“‘It affords me pleasure to express my conviction that his method (founded upon sound physiology) ensures to the student a quick and easy means of correcting this troublesome and annoying imperfection.

“‘Mr. Hunt, Regent Street.’

“‘HENRY RILEY, M.D.’”

“Here we have the unpleasant spectacle of a physician to one of the largest provincial hospitals, and lecturer on physiology at one of the largest provincial schools, writing himself down a pupil of an itinerant empirick.

“‘CURE OF STAMMERING.—No. IX.

“‘11, Lower Brook Street, Grosvenor Square, March 16, 1838.

“‘I have the greatest pleasure in testifying, that having called upon Mr. Hunt, late of Trinity College, Cambridge, respecting the son of a friend of mine (a London banker), who stammered, Mr. Hunt referred me to a highly connected Member of Parliament (with whose family mine happen to have been many years acquainted), who stuttered deplorably eleven years ago. He became a pupil of Mr. Hunt, and was quite cured, as he himself assured me, in eight days. Mr. Hunt next named a Herefordshire gentleman, who has been well known to me twenty-five years; his son was cured of stammering (as he informed me by letter) in 1831, he being then twelve years old, and had been afflicted with this defect of speech from his infancy. Thirdly, I saw Mr. Hunt give a lesson to a young gentleman, whose attempts to speak were distressing to witness. In half an hour he spoke with as much ease and freedom as any youth of his age would do in whom no impediment ever existed. Mr. Hunt confidently expects to cure this little boy in eight lessons of an hour each. Lastly, as a medical man, I can certify that Mr. Hunt’s system is founded on an anatomical knowledge of the vocal organs. The young gentleman alluded to I have again seen, and he was cured in eight lessons.

“‘JAMES EYRE, M.D.’”

“We could pen an article on this extraordinary letter. We hope our readers have a better estimate of Sir James’s high and extensive connexions than of his good grammar. Singular, by the way, very singular, that the knight should have known the ‘London banker,’ and the ‘highly connected Member of Parliament,’ and the ‘Herefordshire gentleman.’ Singular, too, that the last youth should have been cured in exactly the eight lessons, as per prognosis!

“In such testimonials as these, there are always two parties involved in the puff. We hardly know which is the greatest puffer and charlatan, the writer of the puff, or the party who procures it to be written. We should like to have time to calculate minutely, first, how much a man, writing such a testimonial thinks of benefiting those who suffer from the particular disease to be ‘cured;’ and then how much he thinks of the *eclat* of being paraded as an authority,—of being commended for a pointed epigrammatic sentence or two, and of gaining that portion of reputation (a large part, unfortunately,) which depends upon mere publicity and notoriety. We should like to consider this problem at length; but we have no doubt many of our readers will do so, and arrive at the right conclusion. And such a lax state of ethical feeling has been allowed to grow up in the profession, that we have no doubt many well-disposed members will at first be inclined to say—‘Surely there can be no harm in supporting Mr. Hunt if he really can do any good in the treatment of stammering.’ This must be answered by other questions. Is quackery, in the gross, a robbery of the profession, a public crime, and inimical to public safety? and is Mr. Hunt’s practice a part of this detestable system? We would answer that it is; and upon this ground we would desire to destroy it. But we will further state our reasons for such a condemnation. Mr. Hunt is a non-medical person, engaged in the treatment of medical cases, rivalling, in fact, more regularly educated medical men. Mr. Hunt also professes to cure stammering by the use of secret means, and this secret he communicates to no one save on a promise of secrecy. Here, then, are the two most unmistakable elements of quackery, and yet this thing is tolerated—nay, patronised—by professional men. Members of the profession are so forgetful of the dignity of their calling as to give the promise of secrecy, at which a properly constituted mind should revolt at once, and to pen eulogiums of the secret remedy at the self-same time. This empirick—for he can justly receive no other title—parades, among other names, those of Sir J. Clark and Mr. Liston,

and he professes to have once made King's College the scene of his quack exhibitions, under the sanction of many of its medical professors. To parade a whole hospital staff is nothing for his ambitious spirit. Among other things it is common to see this person pronouncing high censure upon Dieffenbach and other eminent surgeons, for resorting to operative means. Operatives may be wrong; but are medical men, by their testimonials, to elevate this empirick into a judge of surgery?

"Some of the advertising quacks have particular habitats. It is astonishing to observe the constant affection they manifest for a particular paper or journal, when the editor, from some accidental cause, notices them favourably. Mr. Hunt is fortunate in this respect: he has almost the run of a very talented and most respectable literary journal. The manager of the journal in question would start at being placed in the same category with those editors, proprietors, and publishers of papers, who advertise that 'Manly Health,' the 'Silent Friend,' and the restoring balms may be had 'at our office.' The difference, however, is only in degree. Quackery is one and indivisible; whether in or out of the profession; in its more modest or its more disgusting aspects.

"A knowledge of the nervous system, of muscular action, and of the organs of voice and speech, are now so well understood, that stammering is no great mystery; and the principle of treatment is so well known that the idea of keeping it a secret is absurd. It is, indeed, a piece of the purest charlatanry; and as such should be scouted by the entire profession. After such men as Sir Charles Bell, Marshall Hall, Muller, and Arnott, have given their best attention to the pathology of stammering, and its means of relief, shall we sink to the Hunts—the mere vocal posture-masters—for its treatment? It cannot be said that, being a specialty, there are no qualified persons to send patients to. Among others in actual practice, it is well known that Mr. Bishop has attended particularly to this subject; and the recent volume of the *Transactions* of the London Medical Society contains an excellent practical paper on the subject, from the pen of that gentleman. We mention this to take away an excuse for recommending Mr. Hunt, which some have urged; and so thoroughly impressed are we with the justice of our views, that we will give publicity to any particulars respecting improper 'professional recommendations of Mr. Hunt or any other unqualified person for the cure of patients suffering from stammering and defective speech. The matter in itself is trifling, but a great principle is involved."

The annexed quotations will show how Mr. Hunt met this not unaccountable attack. The *Literary Gazette* of May 30, 1846, contains the following:—

STAMMERING.

"We have received the following letter and enclosure from Mr. Hunt; and as we have for some years taken and expressed an interest in his method for the removal of impediments in speech, we have no hesitation in giving them a place in the *Literary Gazette*. The confirmation of our earliest opinion of the value of this system, by many cases of very different kinds which we have since witnessed, makes us more than willing to do this duty; and we trust our friends and readers will believe, that if we were not strongly convinced that we were thereby rendering a benefit to humanity, nothing would induce us to place in our page what, we think, in common justice, ought to have appeared in the page of a contemporary."

"To the Editor of the *Literary Gazette*."

"Dear Sir,—The *LANCET* having assailed me with no small quantum of acrimony, I felt called upon to offer such explanation and defence as I could to the Editor of that journal. He, however, not only did not insert my letter, but even rejected a common advertisement which I had paid for at his office, in order, at least, to meet the misrepresentations by a tangible contradiction in the same vehicle. Under these circumstances I have ventured to appeal to your public assistance, and the more unreservedly because your *Gazette* is made to do penance with me in the article alluded to. You, for many years, spoke of my practice with earnestness as wonderfully successful, and no advertisement of mine was ever sent to

you. I did not even know of your connexion with the press when I explained my principles to you; and yet it is insinuated, because I am now more aware of the expediency of meeting all sorts of false reports by statements of facts, and, among other sources, through the *Literary Gazette*, that I owe your advocacy to that miserable sordid cause. But this, except 'to explain,' is neither worthy of notice from you nor me.

"My letter to the *Lancet* is explicit enough to meet all its objections. But a general question arises. Am I (or any one in my position) unduly interfering with a profession, by assuming the ability to correct or amend particular defects? Are there to be no trans-professional men,—all proscribed, from the drill-serjeant and the singing-master, to the teacher of elocution and the management of the organs of speech? Why should Mr. Richard Jones, that admirable comedian, be held to be empirical, in consequence of his being able to teach, from long experience, how to modulate and throw out the voice with the best effect to any distances, from the lamps to the upper gallery, or from the pulpit or the floors of Parliament to the farthest parts of church or house? Or why should I be abused if I go beyond this, and take up a branch of science which has nothing to do with surgery or medicine; and practically devote myself to remedy hurry of speech, indistinct articulation, and other imperfections which (as I have observed) are not diseases, and therefore not within the most jealous assertion of professional prerogative. The eminent medical gentlemen who have borne witness to the efficacy of my system, do not speak of it or me as prescription or prescribing, or apply to us medical praise. They speak of my giving 'lessons'; of my being a 'corrector of impediments of speech' (Dr. Barlow); of my 'correcting this troublesome and annoying imperfection by my course of instruction' (Dr. Riley); of my being a 'master of elocution,' &c. (Prof. Fergusson); and not as the curer of diseased organization, such as demands the skill of the physician or the knife of the surgeon.

"In my letter to the *Lancet*, I have remarked on the Coroner's *recent* discovery of a very *old hypothesis*; and it may not be less interesting, in the history of such mare's nests, to mention that his client's grand scheme is simply the resurrection of Mr. Jullien's plan given to the world a 'long time ago.'—I am, &c.

"T. HUNT."

"To the Editor of the *Lancet*."

"Regent Street, May 20, 1846.

"Sir,—Having in your last number thought fit to make some strong remarks on me and my method for removal of stammering, I trust to your sense of justice for a similar place in the *Lancet* to reply to these allegations. At p. 553, you insert a brief report of the proceedings of the Medical Society of London, in which the merits of 'the acoustic principles' recommended and employed by Mr. Bishop for the same object, are discussed; the chief features in which are, that one or two of the medical authorities present considered the show-case brought before them to have been to a certain extent successful, whilst others doubted the hypothesis; and Mr. Bishop told them that 'the treatment of these cases had been too long neglected by the profession; and the result was, that empiricks or philologists occupied the ground more properly belonging to medical men.'

"But what I have to protest against is, your own leading paper, at p. 557;* where you seem to think it expedient, for the sake of making room

* The article referred to was published as an advertisement in the *Literary Gazette* preclude any idea of misrepresentation, and is added to this republication for the same reason.—J. H.

for your favourite and his system, to demolish me and mine, a prior and successful occupier of the neglected field, and of course an empirick or a philologist, which implies, in your vocabulary, a person incompetent to improve the organs of voice, or remedy impediments of speech. In order to accomplish this, you set out with an assertion, which is the root and foundation of your entire argument, and yet, in my opinion, is altogether a gross and absurd mistake. You declare stammering 'to be a DISEASE,' and consequently its treatment and cure to belong (*exclusively*) 'to the profession of medicine.' Now, sir, I deny that stammering is a *disease*. It is an imperfection occasioned by organic, physical, or accidental causes—the want of some proper regulation or use, and not a disease, though the fruitful source of many diseases; some of which, by reaction, may be confounded with the original cause. Such, for example, as palpitation of the heart, derangement of the nervous system, pulmonary affections, all inducing constitutional debility, both physical and mental, and frequently ending in premature death. These are the effects of stammering; but therefore to call a misapplication of the tongue, the jaws, the throat, or the breath a disease, appears to me to be a ridiculous error; and with its dissipation all your inductions evaporate into thin air.

"Having thus disposed of your first paragraph, I will say little of the verbal hair-splitting which commences the second. Curing or removing are terms perfectly accurate, where an evil has been cured or removed; and whether used professionally or unprofessionally, are clearly intelligible to the common sense of mankind; conveying the same idea without possibility of mistake. And next comes your personal attack upon me—'the person improperly patronised by certain professional men—a Mr. Hunt—formerly a Dorsetshire farmer, who now makes an irruption into London every season, coming in and going out with Grisi and Cerito—making a tolerably abundant harvest; for his practice is said to be flourishing, and his fees to be large.' These are heavy charges. The offence of being patronised by certain professional men must be confessed to be heinous in the eyes of rivalry and competition. You pick up two or three physicians to be made examples of for this direliction. But you forget that in your own report of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of the 10th of December, 1844, you afforded similar countenance to me by quoting the statement of so distinguished an individual as Professor Fergusson, of King's College; and in former numbers of the *Lancet* the inconsistency is still greater, for it not only inserted my letters against surgical operations, but approved of my system on account of its efficiency. To crown the contradiction, I now copy an extract of a letter from the sub-editor of the *Lancet* (who was himself acquainted with the principles of my system), in February, 1843:—

"My dear sir,—I have rarely seen a more severe case of stammering than that of the bearer, Henry Bowring. I have no question of your ability of effecting a perfect cure in his case, for I have already had an opportunity of proving your success in cases equally bad," &c. &c.

"Mr. Liston, and others of the highest reputation, have borne equally honourable testimony to what they have witnessed of the almost undeviating success of my system. It may seem strange, but I really value this patronage, and their continued recommendations of pupils to me, as the best proof of my deserts and triumphs over many difficulties with which you reproach them and me, as proofs of indiscretion on their part, and failure on mine. With you a professional man must not speak the truth of an unprofessional man, on pain of your professional displeasure; and an

unprofessional man is not to make known the gratifying and convincing meed he has received of their approbation without being accused of empiricism and quackery! To the Dorsetshire farming, also, I plead guilty, not 'formerly,' but at this good hour. It has always been my boast, and never kept out of sight; for I proclaimed that it was a Dorsetshire farmer, not two miles from my residence, who discovered *that* vaccination which Jenner so splendidly brought into use.* Nor am I disposed to contradict my contemporaneous advent to London with Grisi and Cerito, nor that we all reap tolerably abundant harvests, commensurate with our several abilities to please or benefit our fellow-creatures. Of the Cerito attractions I have nothing to say; but if Grisi displays one of the finest voices wherewith to delight the world, and I instruct many pupils to acquire a natural, instead of a painful and obstructed mastery over that organ, I really cannot be persuaded that it is creditable to impeach our fair earnings, and abuse us by calling names.

"You proceed to cite some of the auspices quoted in my favour, and to disparage them. The testimonials 'from individual members are bad enough; but what (you ask) will readers think of the following from a medical journalist, who ought to be one of the conservators of the profession?' (not of truth or justice, but 'the profession.') My answer to your inquiry would be, were I a reader cognizant of the fact, that when so able a physician as the late Dr. J. Johnson, in the *Medico-Chirurgical Review*, pledged himself and that respected publication to the fact that he had '*recently seen a youth who had been operated on without the slightest benefit, but who was subsequently cured of his stammering in the course of two or three days by Mr. Hunt,*' that it was about as satisfactory a proof as could be given of the integrity of the witness, and the great value of Mr. Hunt's method. Let me add to its force, that one of Dr. J's own family received lessons from me; and therefore that his being glad to hear favourable reports from other quarters, and observe the patronage bestowed on Mr. H. 'by several distinguished members of the profession,' was simply an acknowledgment of fact, and a confidence, the result of which was an important service rendered to one dear to him. The other censurable instances of medical testimony are not worthy of discussion. If Dr. Riley, of Bristol, one of the most extensively experienced physicians in the kingdom, has seen reason to describe my system as 'founded upon sound physiology,' or Sir J. Eyre vouches for the same, I can see no necessity for vindicating the judgment of individuals so competent to pronounce it. The invidious attempt to depreciate the last-named gentleman, for happening to know a certain London banker, a highly connected M.P. and a Herefordshire gentleman, is put to shame by the simple fact, that when I submitted my host of testimonials to him, he, as a matter of course, referred for corroboration to some of those with whom he was previously acquainted.

"I am subsequently accused of using secret means, and exacting promises of secrecy. It is true that I have required my pupils not to divulge the method—a precaution its simplicity and the ineffectual attempts to pirate and practise it suggested, for the sake of self-preservation; but in the rigid sense of the words, secret means there never were

* Elsewhere and previously, Mr. Hunt, in repelling an attack, had said,—“But, sir, it is not the first time that important discoveries have been made beyond these walls, nor detestable practices carried on by presumptuous and ignorant persons, who had nothing but diplomas to cover their folly and effrontery. It was a Dorsetshire farmer, not two miles from my residence, who discovered that vaccination which Jenner so splendidly brought into use; and with an English University education, I am yet to be convinced that I must be incompetent to remove stammering merely because I have not passed the College!”

any, and never was secret less guarded. Hundreds of the relatives of pupils, medical gentlemen, and intelligent individuals of all classes, have been constantly invited to witness my process; and to speak of 'a disreputable secrecy' is a misrepresentation of the case. How can that be a secret remedy to those who have seen it carried into effect, and bear witness to nothing more than they have seen—the whole process and its success? This is a great confusion of ideas. That I have always been the declared adversary of Deiffenbach and his followers in England, who attempted to cure stammering by surgical operations, is another of the charges to which I plead guilty; and I allow myself to be the empirick who has, in a multitude of instances, restored the blessing of articulate speech to persons upon whom the mutilating process had been previously performed without effect. As for daring to pronounce an opinion upon such 'surgical cases,' I really imagine that I or any other rational being can tell after an operation whether the patient continues to stammer or not.

"But, sir, allow me to add, that the assault upon me is little else than a puff for another—the be all and the end all of your effort. The matter, you truly say, is slight, but the principle involved is great; and yet you venture to arraign my nineteen years of experience, merely on the ground of my not being a surgeon, in order to advance the interest of a new comer into the field, who has advanced a theory questioned by able medical contemporaries even in your own report. I put it to your candour if this be right; or from you I would appeal to one of the coroners for Middlesex, who, in a recent inquiry before him, brought forward, as 'a new cure for stammering, only lately known to a few of the faculty in London,' the method published by M'Cormac eighteen years ago, and long since well known to be fallacious. In the midst of such clashing opinions, I respectfully submit that you should allow me my fair chance among those who profess to remove stammering and regulate imperfections of speech; that you will admit my long practice to go for something in my favour; and that you will not pervert the highest testimonials of success, from the highest authorities, into arguments of condemnation upon, sir, your obedient servant,

"THOMAS HUNT."

* * "We have little occasion to add anything to this correspondence. We have seen among Mr. Hunt's pupils a good many members of the medical profession, who have availed themselves of his tuition in the light in which he offers it, and not as seeking medical aid from one who professes nothing beyond what is here set down, and to have, by long experience, acquired greater skill in removing such impediments, and correcting imperfections and bad habits of speech. Having witnessed the success of these, and numerous other cases, we have no other motive than to make the truth known wherever we have the means."—*Ed. L. G.*

Bearing on the same subject, the subjoined comments appear to be worthy of preservation. The *John Bull* of May 23, 1846, observes :—

STAMMERING.

"About two years ago we brought under the notice of our readers the remarkably successful treatment of this disease (so to call it), by Mr. Hunt, whose process is at once so simple and efficacious as to have obtained the zealous recommendation of many of our highest medical practitioners. Some of Mr. Hunt's testimonials, from Mr. Liston, Dr. Eyre, Dr. Riley, and others, we then gave or referred to, as well as others from private individuals, (the late Earl of Lonsdale, Colonel Livingston, the Rev. E. Wood, &c.)

who spoke, not of what they had heard, but of what they had witnessed either in their own persons, or that of their friends, as to the extraordinary system of cure practised by this gentleman. Since that period we have heard occasionally, and with much satisfaction, of Mr. Hunt's increasing practice, but we had no notion that it had become so extensive as it has, until we saw the *Lancet* of last Saturday. There we behold the better part of four columns devoted to the abuse of Mr. Hunt; and we were at once satisfied that he had taken a position which entitled him to the distinction of being assailed by this publication. And not Mr. Hunt only. All the eminent members of the profession who have borne honourable testimony to his singularly skilful treatment of stammering, come in for their share. The *Lancet* does not attempt, for it cannot, to deny Mr. Hunt's cures; but then, it is shameful to think that Mr. Hunt should be allowed to cure anybody, seeing that he is not a member either of the College of Physicians or the College of Surgeons. If he had pretended to cure stammering, and failed, the *Lancet* would have left him to enjoy his reputation, but having professed his ability to cure, and succeeded, that was abominable. Nor is it merely his success in the abstract which has obtained for him this coarse attack in the *Lancet*. Mr. Hunt's method of cure is so simple, so free from all affected mystery, so inartificial, that his pupils—for we can hardly call them patients—may be said almost to cure themselves, when he has once explained it to them. Now this is certainly very *unprofessional*.

"We have been induced to take this notice of the article in the *Lancet* for two reasons; first, from a wish to vindicate an estimable individual who is rendering signal services to his fellow creatures; and, secondly, to baffle, as far as we may be able, a malignant attempt to deprive the latter of those services by unjustifiable insinuations as to their reality. The motives of the writer of the article are so transparent, so unmistakeable, that were it our own case, we declare, in all seriousness, we would print and circulate it along with whatever testimonials we might, from time to time, think proper to publish."

ERRATA.

Page 9, line 1, for "Psellimus," read "Psellismus."

Page 15, last line, for "Stard," read "Itard."

Page 34, line 5 from bottom, for "frenum," read "frænum."

Page 37, line 2 from bottom, for "Psellimus," read "Psellismus."

Page 77, line 7 from bottom, for "to a gentleman," read "from a gentleman."

INDEX.

PART I.

	Page
Definition of stammering	9
Defective speech, more than one cause for	11
General misuse of the voice	14
The case of Demosthenes	15
Stammering unknown among savages	18
Necessity of a national institution for cure of impediments of speech .	25
Plans of elocutionists	26
Stammering in females	27
Effect on the health	29
Cure more easily effected in children	31
Written instructions, danger of	33
Absurd methods of cure	34
Stammering the cause of melancholy and bodily derangements . .	37
Diseases produced by stammering	39
Feelings of stammerers	40
Imitation a principal cause	41
Lisping and dropping the letter <i>r</i>	42
Time of life proper for the cure	43
Connexion with the nervous system	45
Stammering a want of confidence	46
Necessity of <i>vivâ voce</i> instructions	49
Advantages of continued superintendence and change of scene . .	51

PART II.

Publishing testimonials	54
Opinion of the late Mr. Liston	56
Description of surgical operations	57
Effect of excision of the tonsils	59

	Page
Stammering causing throat ailments	61
Opinion of Sir Peter Laurie, Knt.	62
„ Sir John Forbes, M.D.	63
„ Edwin Saunders, Esq.	64
„ W. Fergusson, Esq. F.R.S.	64
„ Mr. Robert Chambers	67
„ Mr. John Forster	69
Mr. Bishop's pretensions	70
Gratitude of pupils	72
Obituary in <i>Illustrated London News</i>	73
Anonymous advertisers	75
An impostor	77
<i>Cases</i>	from 83 to 88
<i>Testimonials</i>	from 90 to 94
Appendix, dispute with the <i>Lancet</i>	from 95 to 102



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CLASSIFIED INDEX.

Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

	Pages.
Bayldon On valuing Rents, &c.	4
Caird's Letters on Agriculture	5
Cecil's Stud Farm	6
Loudon's Agriculture	13
Low's Elements of Agriculture	14
" Domesticated Animals	13
M'Intosh & Kemp's Year-Book for the Country	14

Arts, Manufactures, and Architecture.

Arnot on Ventilation	3
Bourne On the Screw Propeller	4
Brande's Dictionary of Science, &c.	4
" Organic Chemistry	4
Chevreul on Colour	6
Cresy's Civil Engineering	7
Eastlake On Oil Painting	7
Fairbairn's Informa. for Engineers	8
Gwilt's Encyclo. of Architecture	8
Herring on Paper-Making	9
Jameson's Sacred & Legendary Art	11
" Commonplace-Book	10
König's Pictorial Life of Luther	8
Loudon's Rural Architecture	13
Mosley's Engineering	17
Piesse's Art of Perfumery	18
Richardson's Art of Horsemanship	18
Scrivenor on the Iron Trade	19
Stark's Printing	23
Steam Engine, by the Artisan Club	4
Tate on Strength of Materials	21
Ure's Dictionary of Arts, &c.	22

Biography.

Arago's Autobiography	23
" Lives of Scientific Men	3
Bodenstedt and Wagner's Schamyl	23
Buckingham's (J. S.) Memoirs	5
Bunsen's Hippolytus	5
Clinton's (Fynes) Autobiography	5
Cockayne's Marshal Turenne	23
Dennistoun's Strange & Lumisden	23
Forster's De Foe and Churchill	23
Haydon's Autobiography, by Taylor	9
Hayward's Chesterfield and Selwyn	23
Holcroft's Memoirs	23
Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopædia	12
Maunder's Biographical Treasury	15
Memoir of the Duke of Wellington	23
Memoirs of James Montgomery	16
Merivale's Memoirs of Cicero	15
Russell's Memoirs of Moore	17
" Life of Lord Wm. Russell	19
St. John's Audubon	19
Southey's Life of Wesley	21
" Life and Correspondence	20
" Select Correspondence	20
Stephen's Ecclesiastical Biography	21
Sydney Smith's Memoirs	20
Taylor's Loyola	21
" Wesley	21
Waterton's Autobiography & Essays	22
Wheeler's Life of Herodotus	24

Books of General Utility.

Acton's Cookery	3
Black's Treatise on Brewing	4
Cabinet Gazetteer	5
" Lawyer	5
Cust's Invalid's Own Book	7
Gilbart's Logic for the Million	8
Hints on Etiquette	9
How to Nurse Sick Children	10
Hudson's Executor's Guide	10
" On Making Wills	10
Kesteven's Domestic Medicine	11
Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopædia	12
Maunder's Treasury of Knowledge	15
" Biographical Treasury	15
" Scientific Treasury	15
" Treasury of History	15
" Natural History	15
Piesse's Art of Perfumery	18
Piscator's Cookery of Fish	18
Pocket and the Stud	9
Pycroft's English Reading	18
Reece's Medical Guide	18

	Pages.
Rich's Comp. to Latin Dictionary	18
Richardson's Art of Horsemanship	18
Riddle's Latin Dictionaries	18
Roget's English Thesaurus	19
Rowton's Debater	19
Short Whist	20
Thomson's Interest Tables	22
Webster's Domestic Economy	22
West on Children's Diseases	24
Willich's Popular Tables	24
Wilmot's Blackstone	24

Botany and Gardening.

Hooker's British Flora	9
" Guide to Kew Gardens	9
" " Kew Museum	9
Lindley's Introduction to Botany	13
" Theory of Horticulture	13
Loudon's Hortus Britannicus	13
" Amateur Gardener	13
" Trees and Shrubs	13
" Gardening	13
" Plants	13
M'Intosh & Kemp's Year-Book for the Country	14
Pereira's Materia Medica	17
Rivers's Rose Amateur's Guide	18
Wilson's British Mosses	24

Chronology.

Blair's Chronological Tables	4
Brewer's Historical Atlas	4
Bunsen's Ancient Egypt	5
Haydn's Beaton's Index	9
Jaquemot's Chronology	11
Johns & Nicolas' Calendar of Victory	11
Nicolas's Chronology of History	12

Commerce and Mercantile Affairs.

Francis's Stock Exchange	8
Gilbart's Treatise on Banking	8
Lorimer's Young Master Mariner	13
MacLeod's Banking	14
M'Culloch's Commerce & Navigation	14
Scrivenor on Iron Trade	19
Thomson's Interest Tables	22
Tooke's History of Prices	22
Tuson's British Consul's Manual	22

Criticism, History, and Memoirs.

Austin's Germany	3
Blair's Chron. and Histor. Tables	4
Brewer's Historical Atlas	4
Bunsen's Ancient Egypt	5
" Hippolytus	5
Burton's History of Scotland	5
Chapman's Gustavus Adolphus	6
Conybeare and Howson's St. Paul	6
Eastlake's History of Oil Painting	7
Erskine's History of India	7
Francis's Annals of Life Assurance	8
Gleig's Leipzig Campaign	23
Gurney's Historical Sketches	8
Hamilton's Essays from the Edinburgh Review	8
Haydon's Autobiography, by Taylor	9
Jeffrey's (Lord) Contributions	11
Johns and Nicholas's Calendar of Victory	11
Kemble's Anglo-Saxons	11
Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopædia	12
Le Quesne's History of Jersey	11
Macaulay's Crit. and Hist. Essays	14
" History of England	14
" Speeches	14
Mackintosh's Miscellaneous Works	14
" History of England	14
M'Culloch's Geographical Dictionary	14
Manstein's Memoirs of Russia	14
Maunder's Treasury of History	15
Memoir of the Duke of Wellington	23
Merivale's History of Rome	15
" Roman Republic	15
Milner's Church History	16
Moore's (Thomas) Memoirs, &c.	17
Mure's Greek Literature	17
Raikes's Journal	18
Rankin's Ferdinand & Maximilian	23

	Pages.
Rich's Comp. to Latin Dictionary	18
Riddle's Latin Dictionaries	18
Rogers' Essays from Edinb. Review	19
Roget's English Thesaurus	19
Russell's (Lady Rachel) Letters	19
" Life of Lord W. Russell	19
Schmitz's History of Greece	19
Smith's Sacred Annals	20
Southey's Doctor	21
Stephen's Ecclesiastical Biography	21
" Lectures on French History	21
Sydney Smith's Works	20
" Select Works	23
" Lectures	20
" Memoirs	20
Taylor's Loyola	21
" Wesley	21
Thirlwall's History of Greece	21
Thornbury's Shakspeare's England	22
Townsend's State Trials	22
Turkey and Christendom	23
Turner's Anglo-Saxons	22
" Middle Ages	22
" Sacred Hist. of the World	22
Vehse's Austrian Court	22
Whitlocke's Swedish Embassy	24
Woods' Crimean Campaign	24
Young's Christ of History	24

Geography and Atlases.

Arrowsmith's Geogr. Dict. of Bible	3
Brewer's Historical Atlas	4
Butler's Geography and Atlases	5
Cabinet Gazetteer	5
Cornwall, its Mines, &c.	23
Durrieu's Morocco	23
Hughes's Australian Colonies	23
Johnston's General Gazetteer	11
Lewis's English Rivers	13
M'Culloch's Geographical Dictionary	14
" Russia and Turkey	23
Milner's Baltic Sea	16
" Crimea	16
" Russia	15
Murray's Encyclo. of Geography	17
Sharp's British Gazetteer	20
Wheeler's Geography of Herodotus	24

Juvenile Books.

Amy Herbert	19
Cleve Hall	19
Earl's Daughter (The)	19
Experience of Life	19
Gertrude	19
Gilbart's Logic for the Young	8
Howitt's Boy's Country Book	10
" (Mary) Children's Year	10
Katharine Ashton	19
Laneton Parsonage	19
Mrs. Marcet's Conversations	15
Margaret Percival	19
Pycroft's English Reading	18

Medicine and Surgery.

Brodie's Psychological Inquiries	4
Bull's Hints to Mothers	5
" Management of Children	5
Copland's Dictionary of Medicine	6
Cust's Invalid's Own Book	7
Holland's Mental Physiology	9
" Medical Notes and Reflect.	9
How to Nurse Sick Children	10
Kesteven's Domestic Medicine	11
Latham On Diseases of the Heart	11
Pereira On Food and Diet	17
Pereira's Materia Medica	17
Reece's Medical Guide	18
West on Diseases of Infancy	24

Miscellaneous and General Literature.

Austin's Sketches of German Life	3
Carlisle's Lectures and Addresses	23
Chalvæus's Speculative Philosophy	6
Defence of <i>Eclipse of Faith</i>	7
Eclipse of Faith	7
Greg's Political and Social Essays	8
Gurney's Evening Recreations	8
Hassall on Adulteration of Food	9
Haydn's Book of Dignities	9
Holland's Mental Physiology	9
Hooker's Kew Guides	9

	Pages.
Howitt's Rural Life of England	10
" Visits to Remarkable Places	10
Jameson's Commonplace Book	10
Jeffrey's (Lord) Contributions	11
Last of the Old Squires	17
Macaulay's Crit. and Hist. Essays	14
" Speeches	14
Mackintosh's Miscellaneous Works	14
Memoirs of a Maître d'Armes	23
Maitland's Church in the Catacombs	14
Martineau's Miscellanies	15
Pascal's Works, by Pearce	17
Printing: Its Origin, &c.	23
Pycroft's English Reading	18
Rich's Comp. to Latin Dictionary	18
Riddle's Latin Dictionaries	18
Rowton's Debater	19
Seaward's Narrative of his Shipwreck	20
Sir Roger de Coverley	20
Smith's (Rev. Sydney) Works	20
Southey's Common-place Books	21
" The Doctor &c.	21
Souvestre's Attic Philosopher	23
" Confessions of a Working Man	23
Spencer's Psychology	21
Stephen's Essays	21
Stow's Training System	21
Strachey's Hebrew Politics	21
Tagart on Locke's Writings	21
Thomson's Laws of Thought	22
Townsend's State Trials	22
Willich's Popular Tables	24
Yonge's English-Greek Lexicon	24
" Latin Gradus	24
Zumpt's Latin Grammar	24

Natural History in general.

Catlow's Popular Conchology	6
Ephemera and Young On the Salmon	8
Gosse's Nat. Hist. of Jamaica	8
Kemp's Natural Hist. of Creation	23
Kirby and Spence's Entomology	11
Lee's Elements of Natural History	11
Mann on Reproduction	14
Maunder's Natural History	15
Turton's Shells of the British Islands	22
Von Tschudi's Sketches in the Alps	23
Waterton's Essays on Natural Hist.	22
Youatt's The Dog	24
" The Horse	24

1-Volume Encyclopædias and Dictionaries.

Arrowsmith's Geogr. Dict. of Bible	3
Blaine's Rural Sports	4
Brande's Science, Literature, & Art	4
Copland's Dictionary of Medicine	6
Cresy's Civil Engineering	7
Gwilt's Architecture	8
Johnston's Geographical Dictionary	11
Loudon's Agriculture	13
" Rural Architecture	13
" Gardening	13
" Plants	13
" Trees and Shrubs	13
M'Culloch's Geographical Dictionary	14
" Dictionary of Commerce	14
Murray's Encyclo. of Geography	17
Sharp's British Gazetteer	20
Ure's Dictionary of Arts, &c.	22
Webster's Domestic Economy	22

Religious & Moral Works.

Amy Herbert	19
Arrowsmith's Geogr. Dict. of Bible	3
Bloomfield's Greek Testament	4
" Annotations on do.	4
Bode's Bampton Lectures	4
Calvert's Wife's Manual	6
Cleve Hall	19
Conybeare's Essays	6
Conybeare and Howson's St. Paul	6
Dale's Domestic Liturgy	7
Defence of <i>Eclipse of Faith</i>	7
Desprez On the Apocalypse	7
Discipline	7
Earl's Daughter (The)	19
Eclipse of Faith	7
Englishman's Greek Concordance	7
Englishman's Heb. & Chald. Concord.	7
Experience of Life (The)	19
Gertrude	19
Harrison's Light of the Forge	8
Hook's Lectures on Passion Week	9
Horne's Introduction to Scriptures	10
" Abridgment of ditto	10
" Communicant's Companion	9
Jameson's Sacred Legends	11
" Monastic Legends	11
" Legends of the Madonna	11
" Sisters of Charity	10
Jeremy Taylor's Works	11
Kalisch's Commentary on <i>Exodus</i>	11
Katharine Ashton	19
König's Pictorial Life of Luther	8

	Pages.
Laneton Parsonage	19
Letters to my Unknown Friends	11
" on Happiness	11
Long's Inquiry concerning Religion	13
Lyra Germanica	5
Maitland's Church in Catacombs	14
Margaret Percival	19
Martineau's Christian Life	15
Milner's Church of Christ	16
Montgomery's Original Hymns	16
Moore On the Use of the Body	16
" " Soul and Body	16
" 's Man and his Motives	16
Mormonism	23
Neale's Closing Scene	17
Newman's (J. H.) Discourses	17
Ranke's Ferdinand & Maximilian	23
Readings for Lent	19
" Confirmation	19
Robins against the Roman Church	19
Robinson's Lexicon to the Greek Testament	19
Saints our Example	19
Sermon in the Mount	20
Sinclair's Journey of Life	20
Smith's (Sydney) Moral Philosophy	20
" (G.) Sacred Annals	20
Southey's Life of Wesley	21
Stephen's Ecclesiastical Biography	21
Taylor's (J. J.) Discourses	21
Taylor's Loyola	21
" Wesley	21
Theologia Germanica	5
Thomson on the Atonement	22
Thumb Bible (The)	22
Turner's Sacred History	22
Twining's Bible Types	22
Wheeler's Popular Bible Harmony	24
Young's Christ of History	24
" Mystery of Time	24

Poetry and the Drama.

Arnold's Poems	3
Aikin's (Dr.) British Poets	3
Baillie's (Joanna) Poetical Works	3
Bode's Ballads from Herodotus	4
Calvert's Wife's Manual	6
" Pneuma	6
Flowers and their Kindred Thoughts	11
Goldsmith's Poems, illustrated	8
L. E. L.'s Poetical Works	13
Linwood's Anthologia Oxoniensis	13
Lyra Germanica	5
Macaulay's Lays of Ancient Rome	14
Mac Donald's Within and Without	14
Montgomery's Poetical Works	16
" Original Hymns	16
Moore's Poetical Works	16
" Lalla Rookh	16
" Irish Melodies	16
" Songs and Ballads	16
Reade's Man in Paradise	18
Shakspeare, by Bowdler	20
Southey's Poetical Works	21
" British Poets	21
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